

**AN EXAMINATION OF SEX, ETHNICITY, AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION IN  
EXPERIENCES AND CONSEQUENCES OF WORKPLACE INCIVILITY**

A Thesis

by

LAUREN ELDERS ZURBRUGG

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of  
Texas A&M University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

August 2011

Major Subject: Psychology

An Examination of Sex, Ethnicity, and Sexual Orientation in Experiences  
and Consequences of Workplace Incivility  
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## **ABSTRACT**

An Examination of Sex, Ethnicity, and Sexual Orientation in Experiences  
and Consequences of Workplace Incivility. (August 2011)

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Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. Kathi N. Miner-Rubino

Theories of intersectionality and selective incivility framed this study of interactions between sex, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, and their relationship with incivility and psychological and occupational outcomes. Women, sexual minorities, and people of color were expected to report both the greatest levels of incivility as well as the worst outcomes as a result of receiving incivility. Specifically, sexual minority women of color were predicted to be the most vulnerable to experiencing the highest levels of incivility and to experience the worst outcomes as a result of incivility. Survey data was first collected from a southern United States student sample. Results revealed that sexual minorities reported the most frequent experiences of workplace incivility. In terms of outcomes, sex and sexual orientation interacted with incivility to predict psychological stress and organizational commitment, with sexual minority men evidencing the worst outcomes. To determine the generalizability of the results of Study 1, a second survey was conducted utilizing a United States law school faculty sample. Results from Study 2 revealed that sexual minority women reported significantly higher levels of incivility than members of other groups. Additionally, sexual orientation and

ethnicity interacted with incivility to predict job satisfaction and commitment, with sexual minority people of color reporting the worst outcomes. Finally, sex and ethnicity interacted with incivility to predict psychological distress, burnout, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions, with men of color indicating the worst outcomes as a result of incivility.

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to Mom, Dad, and Sarah for the late night “treatise” runs, the “you-can-do-it” e-mails, and for always being there when I needed to vent...or sob. You helped me to believe in myself when I didn’t, and I truly couldn’t have done this without your constant love and support.

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## INTRODUCTION AND PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW

Many organizations have become more overtly inclusive and tolerant of diversity (Brief & Barsky, 2000; Cortina, 2008), including enacting formal policies against workplace discrimination. However, research suggests that discrimination in organizations remains pervasive (Brief et al., 1997; Dipboye & Halverson, 2004) and that policies often remain unenforced (Riger, 1991; Williams, Fitzgerald, & Drasgow, 1999). In fact, evidence suggests that acts of workplace discrimination may actually be increasing. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (2011) received 99,922 discrimination charges during the 2010 fiscal year, which was a 7% increase from 2009 and an all-time high. Empirical evidence on workplace discrimination also reflects the pervasive nature of this form of mistreatment (Brief et al., 1997; Dipboye & Halverson, 2004). Discrimination may endure in organizations today because it is more subtle than it was thirty or more years ago (Brief & Barsky, 2000; Deitch et al., 2003). Moreover, covert forms of discrimination allow employees to continue to engage in these acts, which are often formally prohibited by organizations, while maintaining an unbiased image and evading punishment. One form of subtle discrimination, workplace incivility, had begun to receive considerable attention (Cortina, 2008).

Defined most recently as “the exchange of seemingly inconsequential inconsiderate words and deeds that violate conventional norms of workplace conduct” (Pearson & Porath, 2009, p. 12), *workplace incivility* is an important issue facing

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This thesis follows the style of *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*.

employees today. A majority of workers cite incivility as being pervasive and major issue in their work and personal lives (Marks, 1996; Pearson, Andersson, & Porath, 2000). Although research has demonstrated that incivility relates to negative consequences for targets (e.g., Lim, Cortina, & Magley, 2008), little is known about *who* is most at risk for being targeted with incivility at work. Selective incivility theory suggests that low-status minority group members may be especially likely targets for workplace incivility (Cortina, 2008). There is ample empirical evidence on formal discrimination at work, and, in particular, gender and race-based discrimination (e.g., Crosby, 2008; Morrison & Von Glinow, 1990), but these findings are limited in the extent to which they speak to workplace incivility. As a whole, the body of research on discrimination at work has not addressed subtle and more prevalent forms of mistreatment, such as workplace incivility, even though it has been conceptualized as a veiled form of modern racism and sexism (Cortina, 2008). Research has also neglected to investigate the extent to which individuals who hold multiple low-status minority group identities are targeted for and affected by workplace incivility.

The present studies seek to address these gaps in the literature by examining the extent to which demographic characteristics associated with societal power and status (i.e., sex, ethnicity, and sexual orientation) make employees vulnerable to workplace incivility and negative outcomes. Specifically, I examine whether employees in low-status social groups report more frequent uncivil experiences and show more pronounced negative outcomes with higher levels of incivility compared to their higher-status counterparts. Further, I investigate whether employees who hold multiple low-status

identities are most frequently targeted and most negatively affected by incivility. In the coming sections, I build arguments for how and why status should play a role in experiences and outcomes of workplace incivility by drawing on selective incivility and minority stress theories.

### **Conceptualizing Workplace Incivility**

Two critical aspects of incivility are: (1) the seemingly harmless nature of uncivil actions (especially when considered as isolated events) and (2) the way in which these acts breach the often unspoken standards for respectful conduct in organizations. Examples of workplace incivility include interrupting a conversation, talking loudly in common areas, arriving late, not introducing a newcomer, failing to return a phone call, and showing little interest in another's opinion (Pearson & Porath, 2009). Workplace incivility overlaps with several constructs within the organizational literature. Foremost, it has been conceptualized as a specific form of workplace deviance as it violates institutionalized norms and threatens the well-being of organizations and their members (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). However, unlike other types of workplace deviance, the motivation to harm in workplace incivility is more ambiguous to both the instigator and the target. Further, while either individuals or organizations can be targets for workplace deviance, incivility is solely interpersonal (Pearson & Porath, 2004).

According to Lim and Cortina (2005), workplace incivility is also similar to another form of mistreatment and workplace deviance, harassment, in that both types of mistreatment can be used to target individuals based on status characteristics. The most extreme forms of sexual harassment, unwanted sexual attention and sexual coercion, are

distinct from incivility in their severity, their physicality, and their sexualized nature.

The form of sexual harassment closest to incivility is gender harassment (Lim & Cortina, 2005). Like incivility, gender harassment is devoid of explicit sexual motives and tends to be more verbal and symbolic in nature (although physical forms are also included in the definition of gender harassment). However, even gender harassment is distinct from incivility. Definitions of incivility and sexual harassment do not overlap when the intent to harm the target is unambiguous to the target, which is usually the case with sexual harassment. Further, while victims of general incivility are unlikely to know why they are being targeted for abusive behaviors (i.e., their gender), individuals targeted by gender harassment are likely aware by virtue of the content of the harassment why they have been selected as targets. Finally, sexual harassment has been tackled by legal circles and is now illegal in workplaces in the United States (Magley, Gallus, & Bunk, 2010), whereas incivility remains untouched by the formal policies in many organizations because it is difficult to police (Cortina, 2008). One study found that employees who report experiencing general incivility are likely to report experiences of gender harassment and sexualized harassment, as well (Lim & Cortina, 2005). The authors were careful to measure distinct constructs in their study and, thus, they concluded that while sexual harassment and incivility may co-occur with frequency, they are also distinct constructs representing unique experiences for targets.

## Target Characteristics

### Low-Status Social Groups

Theory and a few empirical studies suggest that members of low-status social groups may be particularly vulnerable to workplace incivility (Cortina, Lonsway, & Magley, 2004; Cortina et al., 2002). Li and Brewer (2004) define a *social* group as a unit that is formed through the regular, shared experiences of members who share similar attributes and a common heritage. Particularly relevant to this paper, Li and Brewer explain that a unit can also be formed through facing a common problem, such as those experienced by different minority group members as a result of their distinct histories of oppression. In the present study, I examine the uncivil experiences and outcomes of individuals at the intersections of three low-status social groups: women, people of color, and sexual minorities (e.g., gay men and lesbians). Members of these groups have been historically excluded from power and status in society and, further, empirical research has repeatedly documented that these minorities have been targets of overt and sometimes extreme forms of mistreatment, such as discrimination and harassment, due to their lower social status (Berdahl & Moore, 2006; Buchanan, 2005; Hebl, Foster, Mannix, & Dovidio, 2002; Yoder & Aniakudo, 1996). There is reason to believe that these individuals may be frequent targets of incivility as well.

Although a few studies on low-status targets of incivility exist, the majority of research has focused on targets of overt forms of discrimination at work that maintain formal power divides between managers and subordinates, such as discrimination in hiring, being promoted, and being offered a favorable transfer (Baruch & Bozionelos,

2010). Due to changes in law and subsequent norms in organizations, some of these more overt forms of discrimination have dissipated, but research over the past two decades has suggested that subtle, ambiguous forms of differential treatment remain (Dipboye & Halverson, 2004). For example, Lim and Cortina (2005) theorized and found that norms of employee disrespect often exist alongside a climate of harassment in organizations. While enacting harassment is no longer acceptable in most organizations, these climates may create environments in which subtle, daily mistreatment directed at minority group members is overlooked or even tacitly supported. Unfortunately, there is a dearth of research on the distribution of these more subtle forms of interpersonal workplace mistreatment across high versus low-status groups, which I seek to address.

Cortina's (2008) theory of selective incivility was one of the first to frame incivility within the context of interpersonal discrimination. Cortina argues that researchers have largely ignored the social categories on which instigators may act (knowingly or not). In contrast to formal discrimination, which is characterized by overtly discriminatory words or deeds, interpersonal discrimination is conveyed through subtle actions, such as an individual's tone of voice or body language but may still be interpreted by the target as representing more formal attitudes (Hebl et al., 2002). Cortina (2008) argues that targets of such behavior are chosen in a systematic rather than unbiased manner and that some individuals may be especially likely targets for workplace incivility based on their gender or ethnicity. She also acknowledges that individuals may be mistreated on the basis of other social dimensions such as sexual orientation. Because uncivil interpersonal behaviors are seemingly harmless,



perpetrators can mask their discriminatory intentions behind these acts and “maintain an unbiased image” (Cortina, 2008, p. 55).

Supporting these assertions, Cortina et al. (2004) documented that women and racial minorities are especially likely to experience the most ambiguous forms of uncivil treatment, suggesting that workplace incivility may be a particularly common means of discriminating against low-status individuals. In terms of overall frequency of reported incivility experiences, Cortina and colleagues (Cortina et al., 2002; Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout, 2001) found that women were more likely than men to report that they had been targets of workplace incivility, and Cortina et al. (2002) found that ethnic minorities were more vulnerable to mistreatment than Whites. These findings lend support to the notion that low-status individuals may be targeted more often with subtle mistreatment than majority-group members. Thus, a small body of research on targets of workplace incivility is beginning to elucidate the frequency with which low-status group members receive uncivil treatment. It is important to note, however, that incivility frequency related to other status characteristics, such as sexual orientation, as well as multiple low-status characteristics has been largely ignored by the literature. One study on sexual minorities and harassment found that sexual minorities reported being the target of personal harassment more frequently than heterosexuals (Silverchanz, Cortina, Konik, & Magley, 2008). Furthermore, Ragins and Wiethoff (2005) argued that the discrimination suffered by sexual minorities is likely to be subtle and covert due to the affective nature of heterosexism and homophobia, which may be subconscious. The present study extends this work by examining the uncivil experiences and resulting

consequences for women, people of color, and sexual minorities both as isolated demographic categories and in combination.

### **Theories Pertaining to Low-Status Targets**

Underpinning selective incivility theory are theories pertaining to the organization of society at large. These perspectives are especially useful in understanding why low-status individuals may be disproportionately targeted for incivility. Intersectionality theory (e.g., Crenshaw, 1995) is also useful in understanding why individuals with multiple minority identities may be the most frequent targets of workplace incivility. I also utilize the social stress perspective (Brown & Harris, 1978; Dohrenwend, 1973; Kessler, 1979) along with minority stress theory (Meyer, 1995) to explain how minority group members may be especially negatively affected by workplace incivility.

**Societal context.** Cortina's (2008) selective incivility theory is partly based on the idea that organizations in the United States are not isolated entities but, rather, operate within the context of a historically discriminatory society and culture. For example, throughout the history of the United States women have been denied the right to vote, attend certain educational and professional institutions, and have full dominion over their reproductive rights solely on the basis of their gender. Similarly, ethnic minorities have had a long history of oppression in this country, first as slaves and, even after emancipation, through being denied basic rights for many decades. Finally, sexual minorities still do not have many of the legal privileges afforded majority and other minority group members, such as the right to marry or receive certain tax benefits, and

discrimination against gays and lesbians is legal in most of the United States (Herrschaft & Mills, 2002).

The structure of society at large as well as organizational norms tend to reflect a model in which women and ethnic minorities occupy different and, often, lower social roles than men and ethnic minorities based on these historical inequalities (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Bachman, 2001; Eagly & Steffen, 1984; Eagly & Wood, 1999; Sears, 1988). Inequalities remain because those at the top of the hierarchy in terms of power and status are driven to maintain the status quo in order to preserve their resources, maintain their status, and bolster their personal and group-based self-esteem (Dovidio et al., 2001; Fiske, 1993, 2000, 2001, 2002; Operario & Fiske, 1998; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). For example, Operario and Fiske (1998) argue that prejudice alone is not enough to determine the pattern of racism in a society because all individuals are prejudiced to the extent that they prefer their own group over other groups. Instead, it is the structure of power conferred through history and society that deems some groups worthy of exercising prejudice over others, leaving oppressed groups powerless to their demands. As Cortina (2008) explains, “these social structural forces provide prime conditions for discrimination to thrive, in ways both blatant and subtle” (p. 62). Unfortunately these differences only perpetuate negative stereotypes and, often, lead low-status individuals vulnerable to mistreatment.

Organizations have made some strides to address these historical inequalities. While sexual minorities are not protected by policy in many workplaces, women and ethnic minorities are often protected by organizational policies reflecting Title VII of the

Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1989 that protect individuals based on sex and ethnicity. However, even when organizations adopt policies to protect low-status individuals from discrimination, these policies often remain unenforced (Riger, 1991; Williams et al., 1999) and lead to organizational norms of mistreatment based on status characteristics (Dipboye & Halverson, 2004).

**Intersectionality theory.** Intersectionality theory was first developed by Black feminists in the 1970s (Cole, 2009) who argued that women's experiences vary as a function of other aspects of their identities, such as their ethnicity, and that the intersections of different social categories lead to unique experiences for individuals (Steinbugler, Press, & Dias, 2006). This theory posits that there is a crucial relationship between modalities of social identities and that the intersections of social categories are unique and meaningful. Much intersectionality theory and research has been devoted to the intersection of ethnicity and gender (how ethnicity impacts one's experience of gender and vice-versa). This literature emphasizes that mistreatment outcomes are a function of the varied social histories of different minority groups (Wei, 1996).

I expand the empirical domain of intersectionality theory by including intersections of sexual orientation with sex and ethnicity. Crenshaw (1995) argued in her early work on critical race theory that multiple sources of identity, including sexual orientation, should be considered when examining experiences at work. Gay and lesbian employees constitute between 4% and 17% of the American workforce (Gonsiorek & Weinrich, 1991), and they face unique challenges in terms of mistreatment at work that differ from those of other minorities (Ragins, 2004; Ragins, Cornwell, & Miller, 2003).

For example, sexual minorities have the difficult task of choosing whether to disclose their sexual identity at work and to whom and, further, the level of “outness” they will display on a day-to-day basis (Ragins, 2008). Moreover, given the lack of legal protection, it is perhaps not surprising that between 25% and 66% of gay and lesbian employees report experiencing workplace discrimination, including being fired due to their orientation (see Croteau, 1996, for a review). Furthermore, Ragins and Wiethoff (2005) argue that this discrimination is especially likely to be subtle and covert due to the affective nature of heterosexism and homophobia.

Intersectionality theory has also been utilized to explain how those with multiple-minority identities experience unique and often worse forms of mistreatment than others do. Buchanan (Buchanan, 2005; Buchanan & Ormerod, 2002) contributed to this body of literature by examining the experiences of black women. She argued that black women receive distinctive forms of mistreatment due to their dual identities. For example, black women face the racialized gender stereotype of the servant, which originates from their role as servants during the days of slavery. Further, black women report being the targets of lewd comments and jokes at work that derive from a sexualized history of black female slavery (Buchanan & Ormerod, 2002). Buchanan and colleagues (Buchanan, 2005; Buchanan, Settles, & Woods, 2008; Settles, Pratt-Hyatt, & Buchanan, 2008) suggest that for black women, experiences of racialized sexual harassment interfere with job outcomes, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and stress. Thus, black women may have especially negative work outcomes as a result of receiving

specific types of mistreatment that stem from their unique history of subordination.

Based on this theory and research, I made the following hypotheses:

- *Hypothesis 1:* Minorities report experiencing more incivility than majority-group members, with (a ) women reporting more incivility than men, (b) ethnic minorities reporting more incivility than Whites, and (c) sexual minorities reporting more incivility than heterosexuals.
- *Hypothesis 2:* Sex, ethnicity, and sexual orientation interact to predict differential frequencies of incivility such that those with the greatest number of minority-group identities report the highest levels of incivility. Specifically, sexual minority women of color are predicted to report significantly higher levels of incivility than members of other status groups.

**The social stress perspective.** The above theories are relevant for the present study insofar as they address the idea that minorities are likely to have unique experiences as a result of their historical standing and treatment in society. Empirical work following intersectionality theory, such as the work of Buchanan and colleagues (Buchanan, 2005; Buchanan et al., 2008; Settles et al., 2008), has documented that individuals at the intersections of identities experience the worst forms of mistreatment. While these studies have suggested that it is the content of mistreatment that leads to the most negative experiences, there is a robust body of literature suggesting that it is the differential frequency of mistreatment experiences as well as differential vulnerability to those experiences that leads to low-status individuals' especially negative outcomes (Grzywacz, Almeida, Neupert, & Ettner, 2004; Kessler, 1979; Kessler, Mickelson, &

Williams, 1999; Turner & Lloyd, 1999; Turner, Wheaton, & Lloyd, 1995; Ulbrich, Warheit, & Zimmerman, 1989). Understanding how mistreatment may be directed at higher rates towards low-status individuals as well as a whether the same rates of mistreatment lead to worse outcomes for low-status individuals than high-status individuals are the goals of the social stress perspective (Brown & Harris, 1978; Dohrenwend, 1973; Kessler, 1979).

The social stress perspective emphasizes multiple pathways through which the social environment affects psychological distress. Considerable research has documented that environmental stressors significantly increase the risk of psychological distress (Thoits, 1981, 1983). Stressors refer to circumstances (e.g., both negative life event and more mild and chronic strains) than threaten an individual's well-being. As will be discussed in later sections, the present study is concerned with chronic stressors (like workplace incivility), which are problems that are built into the structure of everyday life and may contribute to psychological distress. The social stress perspective suggests that there are two basic mechanisms—differential exposure and differential vulnerability—that work simultaneously to account for the greater psychological distress exhibited among low-status individuals, especially African Americans and women. According to the *exposure hypothesis*, low-status individuals may be more psychologically distressed than high-status individuals because they are exposed to a greater number of environmental stressors. According to the *vulnerability hypothesis*, low-status individuals may be more emotionally responsive to negative life experiences than high-status individuals, given the same exposure to stress.

There are long-observed patterns of a higher prevalence of psychological distress among low-status people (Adler et al., 1994). While the differential exposure hypothesis has not received strong support in the research on acute stressors, such as negative life events, there is support for the hypothesis in terms of chronic stressors. For example, research shows that blacks are not exposed to more undesirable life events than whites (Dohrenwend, 1973; Neff & Husaini, 1980), but blacks experience disproportionately greater chronic problems such as economic hardship and physical illness than whites (Kessler, 1979; Tuner et al., 1995). It has also been argued that women face more daily hassles (a type of chronic stressor) than men (Aneshensel, Frerichs, & Clark, 1981; Barnett, Biener, & Baruch, 1987; Pearlin, 1975; Ulbrich, 1989). Men, on the other hand, report experiencing more major stressors and discrimination (Turner & Avison, 2003). This research also reveals that women also have fewer available resources to cope with chronic, daily stressors (due in part to the constraints of their gender role) than men (Belle, 1982; Pearlin & Schooler, 1978; Radloff & Monroe, 1978). These findings point to the importance of both differential exposure and differential vulnerability, which I discuss next.

As Kessler (1979) explained, “differential exposure to life stressors cannot, in itself, account for the commonly observed relationships between social status and psychological distress” (p. 101). He proposed the vulnerability model as one in which psychological distress is the result of situations acting on individuals who possess varying vulnerabilities to stress. Kessler emphasized that vulnerability is the force with which an individual is impacted by stress, which is a process that is informed in a



complex manner by both the constitution of the individual and the environment that surrounds that individual. Research has found, for example, that although men and women differ somewhat in the number of undesirable life events they experience (with men reporting more events than women), women are significantly more affected emotionally by these events than men (Dohrenwed, 1973; Kessler, 1979; Kessler & McLeod, 1984; Radloff & Rae, 1981). Likewise, Ulbrich et al. (1989) looked at the intersection of race and socioeconomic status (SES) and found that lower-SES blacks are more vulnerable than lower-SES whites to the impact of undesirable life events. However, lower-SES blacks are less vulnerable than lower-SES whites to the impact of economic problems (which the authors conceptualized as a type of chronic stressor). Neff (1985) argued that blacks are more vulnerable to certain negative life events, such as deaths, than whites because such events undermine their personal and social resources to a greater extent. Some of these differences may also derive from the ways in which blacks uniquely cope with stress (see Neighbors, Jackson, Bowman, & Gurin, 1983). For example, there is evidence that blacks use “patterns of resignation,” such as prayer, more commonly than whites to deal with personal crises that they cannot change (Veroff, Douvan, & Kulka, 1981). Blacks also tend to rely more heavily on information support networks to deal with personal problems, regardless of their nature or severity (Neighbors et al., 1983).

It is important to note, however, that past research has primarily focused on negative life events. There has been less research on status differences in response to chronic, daily hassles. Furthermore, research on discrimination and, specifically, subtle

workplace discrimination, is lacking. However, discriminatory behavior is an important feature of everyday life for socially disadvantaged groups in the United States, including women (Gardner, 1995), racial minorities (Sigelman & Welch, 1991) and sexual minorities (Croteau, 1996; Ragins, 2004). Furthermore, numerous studies suggest that discrimination has powerful adverse effects on emotional well-being (e.g., Amaro, Russo, & Johnson, 1987; Meyer, 1995; de Snyder & Salgado, 1987). However, most of the “life events scales” or novel scales created to measure chronic stressors in the studies mentioned in this section have not including questions about discrimination. These findings are also limited in that they focus solely on women and blacks as low-status group members and do not look at other status categories, such as sexual orientation, or status categories in combination. Finally, the focus of the majority of the research on social stress has address psychological outcomes while neglecting other important life outcomes, like occupational attitudes. The final theory presented next helps to address some of these shortcomings.

**Minority stress theory.** Minority stress theory is also informative in understanding why low-status individuals might be likely to experience even worse outcomes than high-status individuals when exposed to discrimination and, specifically, subtle chronic discrimination in the form of workplace incivility. The term “minority stress” was coined by Brooks (1981) and has been defined as “the stress experienced from being the member of a minority group that is marginalized and oppressed” (Smith & Ingram, 2004). Brooks (1981) described how this high-stress state results in changes in the “cognitive structure of the individual” that can lead to “adapational failure” (p. 84).

Thus, according to Brooks (1981), the stress that results from being a member of a minority group may lead to changes in the individual's ability to process information and approach the world, such that the individual may not be able to effectively cope when faced with new stressors. The roots of this stress may be alienation, internalized negative social evaluations, and negative life events related to one's minority status (Smith & Ingram, 2004). More specifically, stigmatized minorities are likely to have experiences that are at odds with those of high-status majority group members. Brooks (1981) developed the concept of minority stress from her study of lesbian women, and Meyer (1995), who developed minority stress theory, studied the experiences of gay men. Therefore, these concepts are especially relevant to the mistreatment experiences and outcomes of sexual minorities.

Meyer's (1995) minority stress theory divides minority stress it into three components: internalized homophobia, perceived stigma, and prejudice events. Internalized homophobia refers to negative views of homosexuality that are internalized by sexual minorities, perceived stigma captures the view that a sexual minorities believes that he or she will be treated unfairly because of their sexual orientation, and prejudice events are discriminatory, biased, or violent actions towards sexual minorities. Importantly, prejudice events vary in intensity, and include subtle instances of bias (Smith & Ingram, 2004), calling to mind selective incivility.

Although minority stress theory was developed to capture the experiences of sexual minorities, I argue that all low-status, historically stigmatized individuals experience daily stress as a result of experiences of alienation, internalized negative

evaluations, and negative life events. Many women, for example, internalize negative views of women that are projected in society and in organizations, such as the notion that women are not competent in certain domains or that they are weak and need protection (e.g., Rudman, 1998; Rudman & Glick, 1999). Further, many women perceive that they will be denied certain earned rights, such as a promotion, due to their gender, which is a perceived stigma (Lyness & Thompson, 2000). Finally, women are subject to prejudice events in society and organizations such as pay gap and higher rates of unemployment (Brief et al., 1997; Dipboye & Halverson, 2004).

While prejudice events range in their severity, even relatively innocuous acts of discrimination or disrespect may result in acute negative reactions for individuals who are members of marginalized minority groups (Smith & Ingram, 2004). Minority stress theory has been used to explain the often catastrophic consequences of heterosexism on the well-being of LGB individuals. For example, LGB individuals have evidenced negative psychological outcomes such as psychological distress, anxiety and depression, and somatic symptoms (Diaz, Ayala, Bein, Henne, & Marin, 2001; Meyer, 1995; Otis & Skinner, 1996; Ross, 1990) as a result of even subtle prejudiced acts. Waldo (1999) extended this research into the work domain, finding that experiences of heterosexism at work were positively related to psychological distress and negatively related to life satisfaction. Importantly, Waldo measured both overt and subtle experiences of heterosexism and found that more indirect experiences of heterosexism were positively related to psychological distress.

While it seems likely that these detrimental outcomes are similar for members of other minority groups when faced with prejudiced events, this issue remains unanswered in the empirical literature. In addition, there has been little research comparing the outcomes of sexual minorities with those of heterosexuals when faced with subtle mistreatment. One exception is a study conducted by Silverchanz et al. (2008) investigating personal and ambient harassment and outcomes for both sexual minority and heterosexual individuals. They did not find support for a moderating effect of sexual orientation or sex on the relationship between harassment and psychological or academic well-being. However, they did not examine whether the interaction between sex and sexual orientation moderates this relationship and only two outcome variables were investigated. Further, harassment includes very overt displays of verbal aggression, such as making homophobic slurs or remarks, whereas this study seeks to advance the literature on the more subtle and ambiguous workplace incivility.

### **Outcomes of Workplace Incivility for Targets**

Research has documented the negative consequences of workplace incivility for the occupational and psychological well-being of those who are targeted (Lim et al., 2008). There are also a few studies investigating status variables as moderators of the relationship between incivility and outcomes. I review this research below.

#### **Psychological Outcomes**

Incivility has been conceptualized as a type of chronic stressor (Cortina & Magley, 2009; Cortina et al., 2001; Lim et al., 2008). Chronic stressors differ from acute stressors in that they occur over an extended period of time and have ambiguous onsets

and offsets (Hepburn, Loughlin, & Barling, 1997). Lazarus and Folkman referred to these types of daily, persistent stressors as “daily hassles” (Folkman & Lazarus, 1990; Lazarus, 1966, 1999). Such hassles are ongoing aggravations that occur as a part of life’s everyday roles, such as that of employee (DeLongis, Folkman, & Lazarus, 1988; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). These daily stressors, while low-impact in the short-term, accumulate to create deleterious work environments that can lead to the development of mental health detriments for targeted individuals. In fact, they can be even more damaging to health than more dramatic life events (DeLongis, Coyne, Dakof, Folkman, & Lazarus, 1982; Kanner, Coyne, Schaefer, & Lazarus, 1981; Langhout et al., 2005). This is because chronic stressors can accumulate to produce an additive “wear and tear” effect on victims through repeated exposure. A few empirical studies (Cortina et al., 2001; Lim et al., 2008) have lent support to conceptualizing incivility as a stressor that produces psychological strain outcomes for victims.

In terms of the moderating effects of status variables, gender has been the primary status variable studied in the literature. Cortina et al. (2001) found a significant interaction between incivility and gender predicting psychological distress, but in the opposite direction than expected—men experienced more pronounced effects of incivility than women. This finding was in line with a study on workplace aggression and subjective well-being, which found that this negative relationship was stronger for men than for women (Kaukiainen et al., 2001). However, a study from the sexual harassment literature found negative longitudinal effects of sexual harassment on the psychological health of female—but not male—employees (Magley, Cortina, & Kath,

2005). Other studies have found that men and women experience comparable psychological outcomes as a result of incivility and sexual harassment (Cortina et al., 2002; Magley, Waldo, Drasgow, & Fitzgerald, 1999). This body of findings is therefore inconclusive and suggests that there may be other variables in combination with gender, such as ethnicity or sexual orientation that may help clarify the relationship between experiences of incivility and psychological outcomes. As intersectionality theory proposes, the experiences of individuals with multiple minority identities are likely unique and especially negative due to their highly stigmatized status in society.

### **Occupational Outcomes**

Mistreatment at work is also related to lower occupational well-being (Peterson, Friedman, Ash, Franco, & Carr, 2004; Roberts, Swanson, & Murphy, 2004; Schneider, Swan, & Fitzgerald, 1997). Specifically, an uncivil work climate may lead to reduced satisfaction with various aspects of a worker's employment, including reduced work satisfaction (Cortina et al., 2001; Lim et al., 2008), lowered commitment (Pearson et al., 2000; Pearson & Porath, 2005), and increased turnover intentions (Lim et al., 2008). For individuals repeatedly targeted by incivility, losing commitment to and satisfaction with their organizations often leads to exiting those organizations at higher rates than other employees (Cortina et al., 2001; Pearson & Porath, 2004).

Although some of this work has examined the link between experiences of incivility and outcomes by status variables, the findings are again mixed (Cortina et al., 2001; Lim et al., 2008). For example, Lim et al. (2008) found that men and women had similar levels of job satisfaction and turnover intentions as a result of incivility.

However, in the sexual harassment domain, Gutek and colleagues (Gutek, 1985; Konrad & Gutek, 1986) found that women were much more likely than men to report adverse job-related outcomes (e.g., quitting a job) from being sexually harassed. As with psychological outcomes, these results suggest that also examining race and sexual orientation along with gender is warranted as it might provide increased insight into the ways in which status and power affect the frequency and outcomes of experiencing incivility.

Research has clearly demonstrated that incivility can lead to harmful psychological and occupational outcomes that threaten employees' well-being both in and outside of work. However, which individuals are most likely to experience the worst outcomes as a result of incivility has yet to be fully explored and understood. Therefore, research examining targets who possess multiple minority statuses is especially needed. Further, the uniqueness of the samples utilized in past research has limited the generalizability of these findings, which are already relatively few or isolated. As I have argued, a strong body of theoretical work suggests that the effects of incivility may not be equal across targets of different statuses, and low-status individuals may be most to experience the worst outcomes as result of mistreatment. From a practical standpoint, knowing which individuals are the most common targets of incivility, as well as how they are impacted by the frequency of these experiences, would allow organizations to be more sensitive and supportive of targets. Based on the past research and theory in this area, I hypothesized the following:



- *Hypothesis 3:* Minorities report worse psychological and work outcomes (i.e., higher psychological distress, burnout, and turnover intentions, and lower job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment) with higher levels of incivility than members of dominant social groups. Specifically, (a) women report worse outcomes with higher levels of incivility compared to men, (b) ethnic minorities report worse outcomes with higher levels of incivility compared to Whites, and (c) sexual minorities report worse outcomes with higher levels of incivility compared to heterosexuals.
- *Hypothesis 4:* Incivility, sex, ethnicity, and sexual orientation interact to predict the severity of outcomes such that sexual minority women of color report the worst psychological and work outcomes with higher levels of workplace incivility compared to employees with fewer low-status social group memberships.

### **Present Study**

The purpose of the present study is to examine how sex, ethnicity, and sexual orientation relate to experiences and outcomes of workplace incivility. Research has documented that experiences of workplace incivility predict declines in psychological and occupational well-being (Lim et al., 2008). However, little research has examined whether target characteristics associated with status and power influence this relationship. I examine this possibility in two different studies: the first includes a sample of college students and the second includes a sample of law professors.

This overall study's contributions are fivefold. First, I extend the literature on workplace incivility by examining three categories of difference of targets: sex, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. Most studies on workplace incivility to date have focused solely on race or gender. Coupled with this contribution, I advance our understanding of the unique workplace struggles of those marginalized in society. Second, I treat these categories of difference not just as independent predictors of uncivil treatment but also as capable of producing a unique synthesis via intersectionality. Third, I seek to address the fundamental question of whether low-status individuals, especially those who belong to multiple minority groups, experience a greater frequency of uncivil work behaviors compared to members of one or more dominant social groups. Fourth, I investigate how low-status individuals' psychological and work outcomes are negatively affected by receiving uncivil treatment. Finally, I test the hypotheses in two very different samples, thereby increasing the generalizability of findings. In light of the call for and importance of real-life implications for research on discrimination (e.g., Fiske, 2000), these contributions are especially important in that they allow researchers to begin to examine how uncivil treatment affects low-status employees.

## STUDY 1: COLLEGE STUDENTS

### Method

#### Sample and Procedure

Students from a large, southern university comprised the sample for Study 1. A paper survey assessing “workplace experiences and interactions” was administered to consenting participants in psychology, business, and nursing classes. The sample ( $N = 243$ ) was 66% female ( $n = 161$ ), 90% white ( $n = 215$ ), 93% completely heterosexual ( $n = 221$ ), and ranged in age from 17 to 58 years ( $M = 23.37$ ,  $SD = 7.51$ ). Additionally, 22% were employed in retail, 15% in food service, 13% in health care, 9% in clerical work, 9% in academia or education, 5% in child care, and 28% in other occupations. Participants had been employed for an average of 2 years, with employment periods ranging from less than 6 months to 21 years. The sample was 83% undergraduate.

#### Measure

The measures used for the present study represent a subset of those included in the survey. Survey construction focused on minimizing response bias and utilizing valid and reliable measures. Demographic variables, experiences of incivility, and psychological and work outcomes were measured. Items were scored such that higher values reflected higher levels of the underlying construct.

**Status variables.** Participants were asked to indicate whether they were male ( $n = 79$ ) or female ( $n = 161$ )<sup>1</sup>. Three participants did not indicate their sex and were

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<sup>1</sup> I used sex as a proxy for gender. This was not intended to minimize the importance of gender or to suggest that sex and gender map onto one another perfectly. However, studies have demonstrated that sex differences correspond to differences on culturally-bound personality variables and societal outcomes

therefore excluded from analyses involving this variable. A dummy variable for sex was created in which women were coded as 0 and men as 1.

Participants were also asked to indicate the ethnic heritage they most identified with. Choices included Black, African, or African American ( $n = 16$ ); Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander ( $n = 2$ ); Hispanic or Hispanic American ( $n = 4$ ); Middle Eastern, Arab, or Arab American ( $n = 0$ ); Native American or Alaskan Native ( $n = 0$ ); White, European, or European American ( $n = 215$ ); or other ( $n = 2$ ). Four participants did not indicate their ethnicity and were therefore excluded from analyses involving this variable. Those endorsing the Asian or Caucasian categories were combined into one category to represent those with similar high-status experiences.<sup>2</sup> Because the sample was predominantly Caucasian, all participants not endorsing White, European, or European American or Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander as their ethnicity ( $n = 24$ ) were combined to create a category representing people of color, following previous studies (e.g., Smith & Ingram, 2004). A dummy code variable was then created in which people of color were coded as 0, and Asians and Caucasians were coded as 1.

Finally, participants were asked to indicate their sexual orientation using the following choices: completely homosexual, lesbian, or gay ( $n = 1$ ); mostly homosexual, lesbian, or gay ( $n = 0$ ); bisexual ( $n = 3$ ); mostly heterosexual ( $n = 11$ ); and completely

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(Lippa, 2010). Therefore, while I recognize that sex and gender are not synonymous, they are strongly related and often lead to similar outcomes for individuals.

<sup>2</sup> There is evidence that Asians and Asian Americans have similar experiences to Whites in the United States, e.g., they do not face the same cultural and racial oppression reserved for Hispanics or African Americans and have similar levels of career and educational attainment (Kim, 1999; Prashad, 2000).

heterosexual ( $n = 221$ ). Six participants did not indicate their sexual orientation and were therefore excluded from analyses involving this variable. The first four categories were then combined to comprise a sexual minority category ( $n = 15$ ) to represent individuals outside of the dominant sexual orientation, as has been done in previous studies (e.g., Silverschanz et al., 2008). Sexual orientation was then dichotomously coded and dummy codes were created with sexual minorities coded as 0 and heterosexuals coded as 1.

**Workplace incivility.** Participants' experiences of workplace incivility were assessed using the Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS; Caza & Cortina, 2007; Cortina et al., 2001). Participants rated nine items on a response scale ranging from 0 (*never*) to 3 (*frequently*) asking how often in the past year they had been the target of subtle, rude behaviors. Sample behaviors include “made jokes at your expense” and “gave you hostile looks.”

**Psychological distress.** Seventeen items from the Brief Symptom Inventory (Derogatis & Spencer, 1983) were used to assess the mental health of employees. Numerous studies across different medical contexts and populations provide confirmation of the validity and utility of this inventory, demonstrating its sensitivity to clinically significant changes in stress and distress levels (Derogatis & Savitz, 2000). Using a 4-point response scale of 0 (*not at all*) to 4 (*extremely*), respondents indicated how often in the past week they had been distressed by various mental health symptoms, such as “nervousness or shakiness inside.”

**Work outcomes.** Job satisfaction was measured via the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, & Klesh, 1979). Respondents

indicated on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) the extent to which each of three statements characterized their work: “All in all, I am satisfied with my job,” “In general, I like working here,” and “In general, I don’t like my job” (reverse coded).

Organizational affective commitment was assessed using Allen and Meyer’s (1990) six-item affective commitment measure. Respondents were asked to indicate on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) the extent to which several statements reflected their feelings toward their work, such as “I would be very happy to spend the rest of my work life at this job.”

**Control variables.** Previous research has demonstrated that dispositional negative affectivity may bias individuals’ responses to items in a survey (Judge & Hulin, 1993; Levin & Stokes, 1989). Thus, negative affectivity was included as a control in the analyses. Items from the Life Orientation Test (Scheier & Carver, 1985) assessed dispositional pessimism—the tendency to expect unfavorable outcomes. Instructions asked respondents to rate the degree to which they agree or disagree with two statements using a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). The items were “I always look on the bright side of things” and “I’m always optimistic about my future” (both reverse-coded).

## Results

Table 1 displays the cell sizes for the status variables in Study 1. Table 2 displays the means, standard deviations, intercorrelations, and coefficient alphas for this study.

Table 1

*Cell Sizes for Study 1 Status Variables*

	Women		Men	
	People of Color	Whites	People of Color	Whites
Sexual Minorities	1	10	1	4
Heterosexuals	14	133	7	66

Table 2

*Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Scale Reliabilities for Study 1 Variables*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Incivility	.53	.67	<b>.91</b>							
2. Sex <sup>a</sup>	.32	.47	.13*	(--)						
3. Ethnicity <sup>b</sup>	.89	.30	.03	-.03	(--)					
4. Sexual Orientation <sup>c</sup>	.93	.25	-.27**	.01	.02	(--)				
5. Psychological Distress	.70	.57	.35**	.08	-.01	-.20**	<b>.90</b>			
6. Job Satisfaction	5.43	1.37	-.43**	-.13*	.04	.09	-.31**	<b>.92</b>		
7. Affective Organizational Commitment	3.19	1.47	-.26**	-.10	.03	-.05	-.18**	.63**	<b>.64</b>	
8. Negative Affectivity	2.49	1.07	.37**	.06	-.05	-.05	.30**	-.18**	-.16*	<b>.72</b>

<sup>a</sup>The sex variable was dummy coded 0 = female, 1 = male. <sup>b</sup>The ethnicity variable was dummy coded 0 = Hispanic, Middle Eastern or Arab, and Native American or Alaskan Native, and 1 = White or Asian. <sup>c</sup>The sexual orientation variable was dummy coded 0 = sexual minority, 1 = completely heterosexual.

\* $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$  (two-tailed).



Incivility was correlated with all of the outcome variables and with all of the predictor variables with the exception of ethnicity.

Hypothesis 1 predicted that minorities would report experiencing more incivility than majority-group members. Specifically, I predicted main effects for each of the status variables, with women reporting more incivility than men (1a), ethnic minorities reporting more incivility than Whites (1b), and sexual minorities reporting more incivility than heterosexuals (1c). Hypothesis 2 predicted that these status variables would also interact to predict differential frequencies of incivility such that those with the greatest number of minority-group identities would report the highest levels of incivility. Specifically, I predicted that sexual minority women of color would report the highest levels of incivility.

I conducted an ANCOVA to test these hypotheses. Sex and sexual orientation were the predictors, and incivility was the outcome variable in the analyses. Ethnicity was subsequently added as a covariate because there were not enough sexual minority people of color to examine meaningful interactions of the ethnic variable with the other variables of interest<sup>3</sup>. Participant negative affectivity was also included as a covariate. Table 3 shows the results of these analyses.

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<sup>3</sup> In addition to not having a large enough cell size to look at interactions of ethnicity and sexual orientation, ethnicity did not interact with the incivility or sex variables. Sexual orientation, however, did interact with these variables and, thus, I chose to focus on sex and sexual orientation in Study 1 rather than sex and ethnicity.

Table 3

*ANCOVA Predicting Incivility in Study 1*

Source	<i>df</i>	Incivility Frequency		
		<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>
Negative Affectivity	1	.57	.57	1.35
Sex <sup>a</sup>	1	.07	.07	.17
Ethnicity <sup>b</sup>	1	.23	.23	.56
Sexual Orientation <sup>c</sup>	1	5.36	5.36	12.77***
Sex X Sexual Orientation	1	.93	.93	2.22
Error	227	95.28	.42	

<sup>a</sup>0 = Female, 1 = Male. <sup>b</sup>The ethnicity variable was dummy coded 0 = Hispanic, Middle Eastern or Arab, and Native American or Alaskan Native, and 1 = White or Asian. <sup>c</sup>0 = Sexual Minority, 1 = Heterosexual. \**p* < .05, \*\**p* < .01, \*\*\**p* < .001.

Hypothesis 1a and 1b were not supported as main effects for sex and ethnicity were not found. Surprisingly, the patterns of means were not as expected, with women ( $M = .46$ ,  $SD = .65$ ) reporting less frequent incivility than men ( $M = .63$ ,  $SD = .73$ ), and ethnic minorities ( $M = .34$ ,  $SD = .51$ ) reporting less frequent incivility than Whites ( $M = .89$ ,  $SD = .11$ ). Hypothesis 1c, however, was supported, with results showing that after accounting for the controls there was a main effect for sexual orientation on incivility,  $F(1, 227) = 12.77$ ,  $p < .001$ , such that incivility was higher for sexual minorities ( $M = 1.22$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ) than for heterosexuals ( $M = .47$ ,  $SD = .60$ ).

None of the predictions of Hypothesis 2 were supported; that is, experiences of incivility did not depend on multiple status variables. Instead, sexual orientation was the only factor influencing incivility frequency. Thus, there was only the main effect of

sexual orientation on incivility and no significant interaction of sex and sexual orientation. The pattern of means was somewhat as expected with sexual minority women ( $M = 1.34$ ,  $SD = 1.20$ ) and sexual minority men ( $M = 1.22$ ,  $SD = 1.3$ ) reporting the highest mean levels of incivility. However, heterosexual men had the next highest levels of incivility ( $M = .61$ ,  $SD = .68$ ), with heterosexual women reporting the lowest levels of incivility ( $M = .40$ ,  $SD = .68$ ).

Hypothesis 3 predicted that minorities would report worse psychological and work outcomes (i.e., higher psychological distress, and lower job satisfaction and organizational commitment) with higher levels of incivility than members of dominant social groups. Sex, sexual orientation, and ethnicity were predicted to moderate the relationship between incivility and each of the three outcomes of interest. Specifically, two-way interactions were predicted, such that women would report worse outcomes than men with higher levels of incivility (3a), sexual minorities would report worse outcomes than heterosexuals with higher levels of incivility (3b), and ethnic minorities would report worse outcomes than Whites with higher levels of incivility (3c).

Hypothesis 4 predicted that sexual minority women of color would report the worst psychological and work outcomes with higher levels of workplace incivility compared to employees with fewer low-status social group memberships.

I used hierarchical moderated regression to test the third and fourth hypotheses. Incivility was the predictor, sex, sexual orientation, and ethnicity were the moderator variables, and psychological distress, job satisfaction, and affective organizational commitment were the outcomes of interest. To correct for multicollinearity that often

accompanies testing moderating relationships, I centered the incivility variable before computing interaction terms. Negative affectivity was again included as a covariate.

Results for the third set of hypotheses were supported for the outcome variable of job satisfaction. There was a significant main effect of incivility on job satisfaction, and this main effect was qualified by a two-way interaction between incivility and sexual orientation predicting job satisfaction, ( $b = .65$ ,  $\beta = .27$ ,  $SE = .32$ ,  $p < .05$ ) (see Table 4). This interaction is depicted in Figure 1. Simple slope analyses were conducted to examine the nature of these relationships. Supporting hypothesis 3c, results showed that employees reported significantly less job satisfaction with increasing levels of incivility when they were sexual minorities ( $b = -1.73$ ,  $\beta = -.85$ ,  $SE = .69$ ,  $p = .01$ ). In contrast, heterosexuals reported similar levels of job satisfaction regardless of the amount of incivility received ( $b = -1.08$ ,  $\beta = -.53$ ,  $SE = .62$ ,  $ns$ ). However, hypothesis 3c was not supported for any of the other outcome variables of interest, nor was hypothesis 3a or 3b.

Table 4

*Hierarchical Moderated Regression Predicting Job Satisfaction in Study 1*

Predictor	Job Satisfaction		
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )
Constant	6.06***	5.55***	5.67**
Negative Affectivity	-.27 (-.21)**	-.21 (-.16)**	-.21(-.16)**
Incivility		-.88(-.43)***	-1.73(-.85)**
Sex <sup>a</sup>		-.21(-.07)	-.03(-.01)
Ethnicity <sup>b</sup>		.48(1.68)	.93(.19)
Sexual Orientation <sup>c</sup>		-.02(-.00)	-.41(-.07)
Incivility X Sex			.05(.01)
Incivility X Ethnicity			.33(.16)
Incivility X Sexual Orientation			.65(.27)*
Sex X Ethnicity			-.91(-.30)
Sex X Sexual Orientation			.66(.22)
Ethnicity X Sexual Orientation			-.14(-.04)
Total $R^2$	.04	.24	.27
$\Delta R^2$	.04	.20	.02
$\Delta F$	10.15**	14.50***	7.26***

<sup>a</sup>0 = Female, 1 = Male. <sup>b</sup>The ethnicity variable was dummy coded 0 = Hispanic, Middle Eastern or Arab, and Native American or Alaskan Native, and 1 = White or Asian. <sup>c</sup>0 = Sexual Minority, 1 = Heterosexual. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

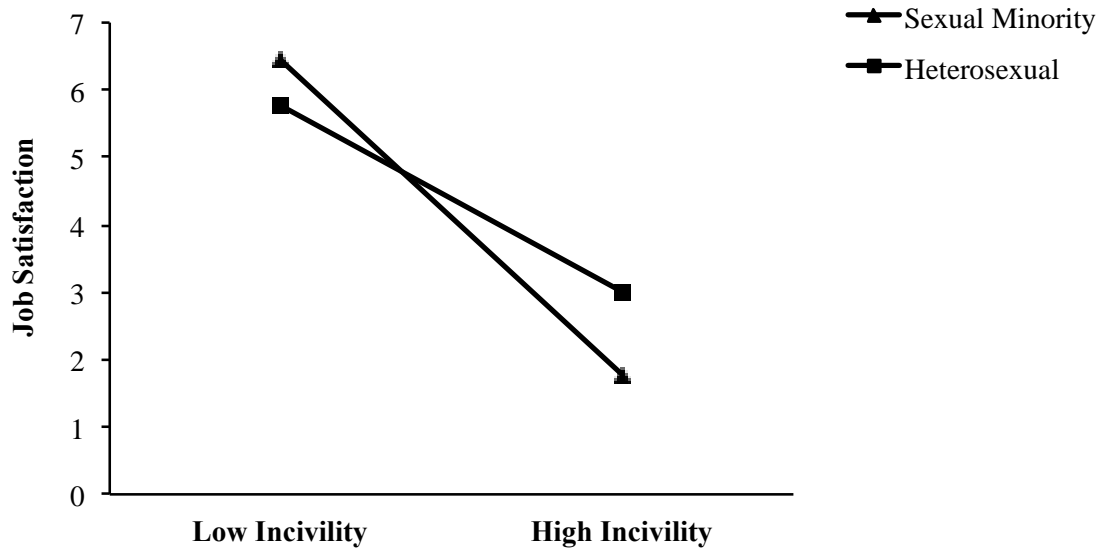


Figure 1. Interaction between incivility and sexual orientation on job satisfaction.

Testing the fourth hypothesis involved adding fourth (3-way interactions among the predictors) and fifth (four-way interaction among the predictors) steps to the above moderated hierarchical regressions. However, only three-way interactions (between incivility, sex, and sexual orientation) were found and for only two outcome variables.<sup>4</sup> Main effects of incivility on psychological distress and affective organizational commitment were qualified by interactions among incivility, sex, and sexual orientation on these outcomes, ( $b = .57$ ,  $\beta = .42$ ,  $SE = .30$ ,  $p = .05$ ) for psychological distress and ( $b = -1.51$ ,  $\beta = -.45$ ,  $SE = .79$ ,  $p = .05$ ) for affective commitment (see Tables 5 and 6). The significant interactions are displayed in Figures 2 and 3. Simple slope analyses revealed that for psychological distress, sexual minority men reported the greatest psychological distress with increased levels of incivility ( $b = 1.15$ ,  $\beta = 1.31$ ,  $SE = .47$ ,  $p = .01$ ). The

<sup>4</sup> Because the four-way interactions were not significant, I removed the four-way interaction terms in the analyses to conserve degrees of freedom.

simple slope for sexual minority women ( $b = .72$ ,  $\beta = .82$ ,  $SE = .38$ ,  $p = .06$ ), heterosexual women ( $b = .65$ ,  $\beta = .74$ ,  $SE = .34$ ,  $p = .06$ ), and heterosexual men were not significant ( $b = .51$ ,  $\beta = .58$ ,  $SE = .40$ ,  $p = ns$ ).

Table 5

*Hierarchical Moderated Regression Predicting Psychological Distress in Study 1*

Predictor	Psychological Distress			
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
	$B$ ( $\beta$ )	$B$ ( $\beta$ )	$B$ ( $\beta$ )	$B$ ( $\beta$ )
Constant	.28**	.61**	.78	.93
Negative Affectivity	.17(.31)***	.15(.28)***	.15(.28)***	.15(.27)***
Incivility		.25(.29)***	.89(1.01)**	1.15(1.31)**
Sex <sup>a</sup>		2.17(.00)	.33(.27)	.66(.54)
Ethnicity <sup>b</sup>		-.04(.12)	-.56(-.27)	-.93(-.45)
Sexual Orientation <sup>c</sup>		-.27(-.11)	-.76(-.32)	-.88(-.37)
Incivility X Sex			-.05(-.04)	-.43(-.37)
Incivility X Ethnicity			-.41(-.46)	-.35(-.39)
Incivility X Sexual Orientation			-.26(-.26)	-.63(-.63)**
Sex X Sexual Orientation			.16(.13)	-.16(-.13)
Sex X Ethnicity			-.55(-.48)	-.56(-.48)
Sexual Orientation X Ethnicity			.87(.53)	1.22(.75)
Incivility X Sex X Ethnicity				-.10(-.08)
Incivility X Sex X Sexual Orientation				.57(.42)*
Total $R^2$	.10	.21	.24	.25
$\Delta R^2$	.10	.11	.03	.01
$\Delta F$	23.66***	11.28***	5.98***	5.39***

<sup>a</sup>0 = Female, 1 = Male. <sup>b</sup>The ethnicity variable was dummy coded 0 = Hispanic, Middle Eastern or Arab, and Native American or Alaskan Native, and 1 = White or Asian. <sup>c</sup>0 = Sexual Minority, 1 = Heterosexual. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

Table 6

*Hierarchical Moderated Regression Predicting Affective Organizational Commitment in Study 1*

Predictor	Affective Organizational Commitment			
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )
Constant	3.81***	3.87***	3.65**	3.17*
Negative Affectivity	-.26(-.18)**	-.22(-.15)**	-.22(-.16)**	-.21(-.15)*
Incivility		-.61(-.28)***	-.78(-.36)	-1.62(-.74)
Sex <sup>a</sup>		.14(.04)	-.51(-.16)	-1.44(-.46)
Ethnicity <sup>b</sup>		.32(.06)	1.50(.28)	2.57(.49)
Sexual Orientation <sup>c</sup>		-.61(-.10)	.34(.05)	.75(.12)
Incivility X Sex			-.28(-.10)	.90(.32)
Incivility X Ethnicity			-.20(-.09)	-.26(-.12)
Incivility X Sexual Orientation			.65(.26)	1.69(.67)**
Sex X Ethnicity			1.09(.37)	1.09(.37)
Sex X Sexual Orientation			-.27(-.08)	.65(.21)
Ethnicity X Sexual Orientation			-2.00(-.48)	-3.06(-.73)
Incivility X Sex X Ethnicity				.09(.03)
Incivility X Sex X Sexual Orientation				-1.51(-.45)*
Total $R^2$	.04	.12	.15	.16
$\Delta R^2$	.04	.08	.03	.01
$\Delta F$	8.48**	6.02***	3.55***	3.31***

<sup>a</sup>0 = Female, 1 = Male. <sup>b</sup>The ethnicity variable was dummy coded 0 = Hispanic, Middle Eastern or Arab, and Native American or Alaskan Native, and 1 = White or Asian. <sup>c</sup>0 = Sexual Minority, 1 = Heterosexual.  
 \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .



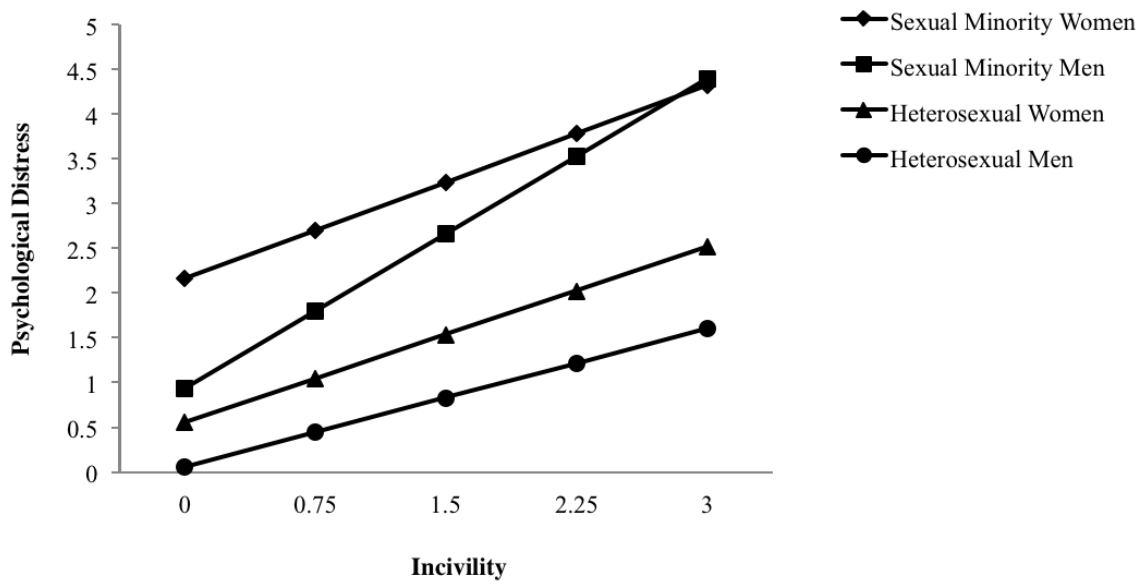


Figure 2. Interaction among incivility, sex, and sexual orientation on psychological distress.

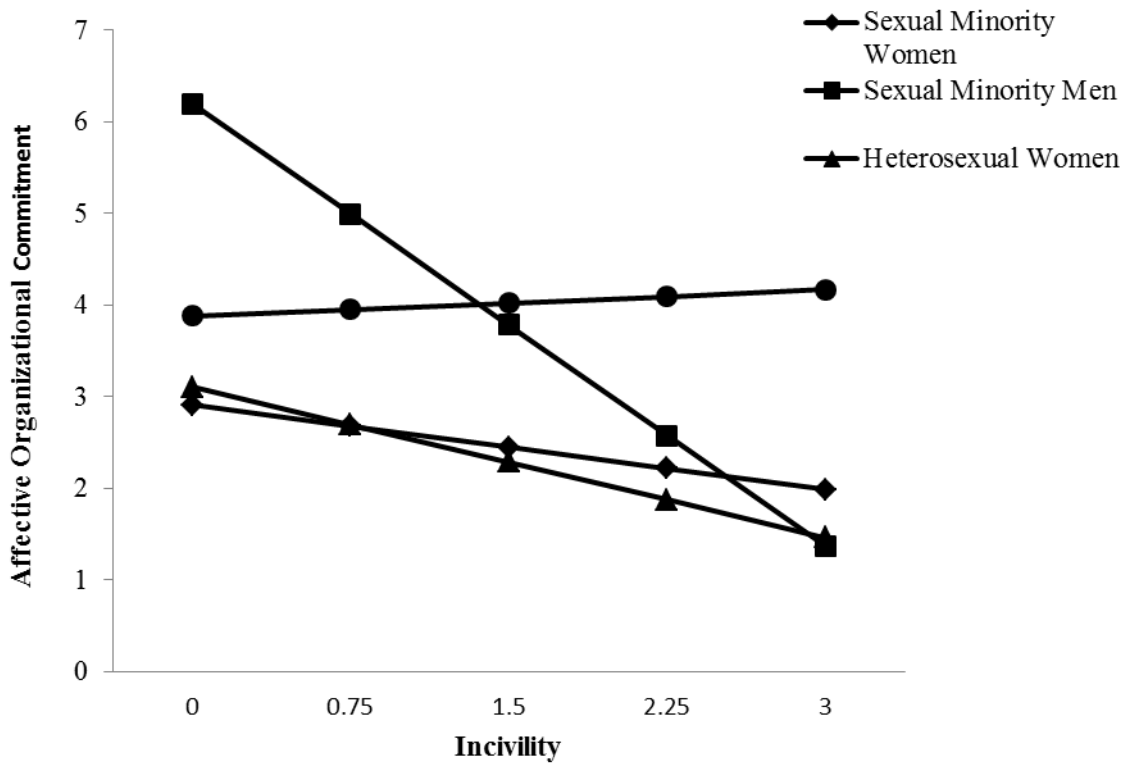


Figure 3. Interaction among incivility, sex, and sexual orientation on affective organizational commitment.

Finally, for affective organizational commitment, the same three-way interaction among incivility, sex, and sexual orientation was examined, but it evidenced no significant simple slopes. This means that the slopes for sex, sexual orientation, and incivility were significantly different from one another, but not from zero. The fact that individuals in the different status groups had different levels of affective organizational commitment from one another supports Hypothesis 4. In investigating the simple two-way interactions, it was found that within men, there was a significant interaction between incivility and sexual orientation ( $b = -1.69$ ,  $\beta = .67$ ,  $SE = .65$ ,  $p = .01$ ), indicating that the relationship between incivility and affective organizational commitment is moderated by sexual orientation. Thus, there was a significant difference between the simple slope for sexual minority men ( $b = -1.62$ ,  $\beta = -.74$ ,  $SE = 1.26$ ,  $p = ns$ ), which indicated a strong, negative relationship between incivility and affective organizational commitment, and that of heterosexual men ( $b = .07$ ,  $\beta = .03$ ,  $SE = 1.08$ ,  $p = ns$ ), which revealed no relationship between incivility and affective organizational commitment for these individuals. This simple two-way interaction was not significant for women, meaning that for women, sexual orientation did not moderate the relationship between incivility and affective organizational commitment. In other words, the simple slope for sexual minority women ( $b = -.72$ ,  $\beta = -.33$ ,  $SE = 1.03$ ,  $p = ns$ ) did not differ significantly from that of heterosexual women ( $b = -.54$ ,  $\beta = -.25$ ,  $SE = .93$ ,  $p = ns$ ).

## Discussion

In this study of employed students, results showed that sexual minorities reported more frequent incivility than heterosexuals, supporting Hypothesis 1c. However, women and men did not significantly differ in the frequency with which they reported being targeted with incivility, which contradicts some past research (Cortina et al., 2001, 2002) and Hypothesis 1a. Similarly, ethnic minorities and Whites did not differ in the amount of incivility reported and, therefore, Hypothesis 1b was not supported. There were also no interactions between the status variables in predicting incivility frequency as predicted in Hypothesis 2. Taken together, these findings suggest that sexual minority status may make one particularly vulnerable to experiences of incivility at work.

Hypothesis 3 and 4 regarding the impact of incivility on outcomes received partial support. In terms of Hypothesis 3c, incivility and sexual orientation interacted to predict job satisfaction with sexual minorities reporting significantly less job satisfaction with higher levels of incivility than heterosexuals. However, no evidence was found supporting Hypothesis 3a or 3b. Adding sex to the sexual orientation and incivility interaction significantly predicted the outcome variables of psychological distress and affective organizational commitment. Interestingly, across these outcomes, sexual minority men evidenced the most negative outcomes as a result of incivility—they reported the highest levels of psychological distress and the lowest organizational commitment with higher incivility. These findings contradict several of my predictions. First, ethnicity did not interact with incivility and the other status variables to predict outcomes, which meant that Hypothesis 4 could not be fully supported. Further, the

finding that sexual minority men, rather than sexual minority women, evidenced the worst outcomes as a result of incivility contradicted Hypothesis 4 in that I predicted that those with the most low-status identities would have the worst outcomes. These findings suggest that sexual minority men may be particularly harmed when they are the target of rude workplace behavior.

There are a number of limitations of Study 1 which limit conclusions regarding the relationship between social status, incivility, and outcomes. First, there was a small number of ethnic minorities (and sexual minorities) in the sample which prohibited investigating the experiences of sexual minorities of color. Second, the sample was composed of employed students who tend to hold retail and service jobs thereby limiting the generalizability of findings to individuals holding more professional positions. Third, the study was conducted within the context of a Southern university where heterosexist norms for masculinity are strong (Kimmel, 2006; Levant, Majors, & Kelley, 1998) possibly making sexual minority men especially vulnerable to the impact of incivility. Finally, a power analysis revealed that the data did not meet the recommended threshold of .80 for detecting small effects according to Cohen (1988). I therefore conducted a second study to (a) validate the findings of Study 1, (b) test the hypotheses in a more diverse sample in terms of ethnicity and sexual orientation, (c) test the hypotheses on a broader sample of individuals in terms of age and region, (d) investigate a sample of full-time working adults engaged in more consistent employment, (e) examine a larger sample with greater power to detect effects, and (f) examine two additional outcomes: burnout and turnover intentions.

## STUDY 2: LAW PROFESSORS

### Method

#### Sample and Procedure

In June 2004, an e-mail request was sent to members of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS;  $N = 8,929$ ) asking them to participate in a study examining “quality of life in law academia.” The e-mail contained a brief description of the study and a link to an online survey. Nine-hundred of the invitation e-mails were rejected due to e-mail filters or inaccurate e-mail addresses and, thus, the total potential pool of participants was 8,029. Of these, 1,810 responded to the survey (a 23% response rate). Five-hundred and ten of these participants were excluded due to skipping more than fifty percent of the items on the survey, leaving a final response rate of 15%. The final sample ( $N = 1,300$ ) was 48% female ( $n = 607$ ), 86% white ( $n = 1,107$ ), and 89% completely heterosexual ( $n = 1,140$ ). Participants’ age ranged from 27 to 80 years old ( $M = 51$ ,  $SD = 10.05$ ) and employment with their law school ranged from less than 1 year to more than 30 years ( $M = 13.29$ ,  $SD = 8.85$ ).

#### Measures

Participants completed identical measures to those used in Study 1 with the addition of three variables. A demographic variable measuring the political ideology of the region participants’ worked was added and entered as a covariate in all analyses (to help address the limitation in Study 1 of regional norms regarding attitudes toward sexual minorities). The outcome variables job burnout and turnover intentions were also added.

**Region political ideology.** Participants were asked “In which region of the country is your law school located?” and were given a list of eight regions to choose from: Alaska, Hawaii, Midwest, Northeast, Mountain, Pacific West, South, and Southwest. These responses were then coded to represent the political party of the presidential candidate with the most votes in the majority of states in that area over a sixteen-year period (Abramowitz, 2009). Specifically, these distinctions were reached by compiling the average margins of victory in the five presidential elections between 1992 and 2008. Participants who indicated that their law school was in Alaska, the Mountain region, or the South were given a code indicating political conservatism (“Red States”) as these states tend to vote predominantly for Republican presidential candidates. Those participants who indicated that their school was in the Northeast, Hawaii, or Pacific West were marked as living in a region or state (in the case of Hawaii) that has historically support Democratic presidential candidates (“Blue States”). Finally, participants selecting the Southwest or the Midwest were given a code indicating that the region was a “battleground” in elections, with an equal number of states selecting democratic and republican candidates. Political affiliation has been shown to be related to both incivility experiences and outcomes (Miner-Rubino & Pesonen, 2011).

**Work outcomes.** Twelve items from the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001) were used to measure symptoms of job burnout. The OLBI has two dimensions: exhaustion and disengagement (six items for each subscale). An example item is “during my job, I often feel emotionally drained,” which is rated on a scale from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 4 (*totally agree*).

Turnover intentions was measured with Porter, Crampon, and Smith’s (1976) two-item measure. Respondents indicated, using a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), their level of agreement with the statements “I often think about quitting my job” and “I will probably look for a new job during the next year.”

## Results

Table 7 displays the cell sizes for the Study 2 status variables. Table 8 displays means, standard deviations, intercorrelations, and coefficient alphas for Study 2. Incivility was correlated with all of the outcome variables and with all of the predictor variables with the exception of ethnicity.

Table 7

*Cell Sizes for Study 2 Status Variables*

	Women		Men	
	People of Color	Whites	People of Color	Whites
Sexual Minorities	17	67	10	51
Heterosexuals	74	442	75	511



Table 8

*Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Scale Reliabilities for Study 1 Variables*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Incivility	.54	.58	<b>.85</b>											
2. Sex <sup>a</sup>	.52	.49	-.12**	(--)										
3. Ethnicity <sup>b</sup>	.85	.34	-.03	.02	(--)									
4. Sexual Orientation <sup>c</sup>	.88	.31	-.06*	.06*	.04	(--)								
5. Psych. Distress	1.33	.37	.36**	-.09**	.01	-.14**	<b>.88</b>							
6. Job Satisfaction	5.76	1.35	-.48**	.14**	.06*	.09**	-.33**	<b>.89</b>						
7. Commitment	4.99	1.54	-.42**	.12**	.12**	.05	-.26**	.75**	<b>.79</b>					
8. Burnout	3.41	.71	.35***	-.12**	-.01	-.04	.45***	-.58***	-.45***	<b>.80</b>				
9. Turnover Intent.	2.60	1.62	.26**	-.09**	-.10**	-.04**	.24**	-.64**	-.61**	.43***	<b>.60</b>			
10. NA	2.79	1.16	.26**	-.01	-.01	-.04	.45**	-.37**	-.31**	.39***	.26**	<b>.85</b>		
11. Red States <sup>d</sup>	.26	.44	.05	.02	.10**	.06	.00	-.00	-.00	.01	.03	-.02	(--)	
12. Blue States <sup>e</sup>	.39	.49	-.03	-.02	-.06	-.02	.01	.05	.05	-.04	-.08**	.02	-.47**	(--)

<sup>a</sup>The sex variable was dummy coded 0 = female, 1 = male. <sup>b</sup>The ethnicity variable was dummy coded 0 = Hispanic, Middle Eastern or Arab, and Native American or Alaskan Native, and 1 = White or Asian. <sup>c</sup>The sexual orientation variable was dummy coded 0 = sexual minority, 1 = completely heterosexual. <sup>d</sup>The Red States variable was coded 1 = Republican, 0 = Democrat, 0 = Battle Region. <sup>e</sup>The Blue States variable was coded 1 = Democrat, 0 = Republican, 0 = Battle Region.

\* $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$  (two-tailed).

Hypothesis 1 predicted that minorities would report experiencing more incivility than majority-group members with women reporting more incivility than men (1a), ethnic minorities reporting more incivility than Whites (1b), and sexual minorities reporting more incivility than heterosexuals (1c). Hypothesis 2 predicted that these status variables would interact to predict differential frequencies of incivility such that those with the greatest number of minority-group identities would report the highest levels of incivility. Specifically, I predicted that sexual minority women of color would report the highest levels of incivility.

As in Study 1, I conducted an ANCOVA to test these hypotheses. Sex, ethnicity, and sexual orientation were the predictor variables and incivility was the outcome variable in the analyses. Participant negative affectivity and political ideology of the region respondents worked were included as covariates. Table 9 shows the results of these analyses.

Table 9

*ANCOVA of Sex and Sexual Orientation Predicting Incivility in Study 2*

Source	Incivility Frequency			
	<i>df</i>	SS	MS	<i>F</i>
Negative Affectivity	1	21.77	21.77	66.06***
Red States <sup>a</sup>	1	.59	.59	1.80
Blue States <sup>b</sup>	1	.01	.01	.05
Sex <sup>c</sup>	1	3.48	3.48	10.56***
Ethnicity <sup>d</sup>	1	.50	.50	1.51
Sexual Orientation <sup>e</sup>	1	.00	.00	.00
Sex X Ethnicity	1	.07	.07	.22
Sex X Sexual Orientation	1	2.50	2.50	7.59**
Ethnicity X Sexual Orientation	1	.55	.55	1.68
Sex X Ethnicity X Sexual Orientation	1	.22	.22	.69
Error	883	291.03	.33	

<sup>a</sup>The Red States variable was coded 1 = Republican, 0 = Democrat, 0 = Battle Region. <sup>b</sup>The Blue States variable was coded 1 = Democrat, 0 = Republican, 0 = Battle Region. <sup>c</sup>The sex variable was dummy coded 0 = female, 1 = male. <sup>d</sup>The ethnicity variable was dummy coded 0 = Hispanic, Middle Eastern or Arab, and Native American or Alaskan Native, and 1 = White or Asian. <sup>e</sup>The sexual orientation variable was dummy coded 0 = sexual minority, 1 = completely heterosexual.

\* $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$  (two-tailed).

Unlike Study 1, Hypothesis 1a was supported. Results showed that after accounting for controls, there was a main effect of sex on incivility,  $F(1, 884) = 10.56$   $p < .001$ , such that women ( $M = 1.63$ ,  $SD = .63$ ) reported higher levels of incivility than men ( $M = 1.48$ ,  $SD = .56$ ). Hypotheses 1b and 1c were not supported, although the patterns of means were as expected, with ethnic minorities ( $M = 1.58$ ,  $SD = .63$ ) reporting more frequent incivility than Whites and Asians ( $M = 1.54$ ,  $SD = .59$ ), and

sexual minorities ( $M = 1.64$ ,  $SD = .62$ ) reporting more incivility than heterosexuals ( $M = 1.54$ ,  $SD = .59$ ).

Hypothesis 2 was not supported as there was no interaction among sex, ethnicity, and sexual orientation predicting experiences of incivility. However, the main effect for sex was qualified by a two-way interaction between sex and sexual orientation on incivility,  $F(1, 884) = 7.59$ ,  $p < .01$ ; see Table 9. This interaction is presented in Figure 4. Follow-up simple effects tests revealed that the effect of sex was significant both within sexual minorities [ $F(1, 890) = 16.14$ ,  $p < .001$ ] and within heterosexuals [ $F(1, 890) = 7.83$ ,  $p < .01$ ], and that the effect of sexual orientation was significant within women [ $F(1, 890) = 9.31$ ,  $p < .01$ ], but not within men [ $F(1, 890) = 1.37$ ,  $ns$ ]. Supporting Hypothesis 2, these tests revealed that the mean for sexual minority women ( $M = 1.80$ ,  $SD = .59$ ) differed significantly from that of heterosexual women, sexual minority men, and heterosexual men. In terms of the pattern of the means, heterosexual women reported the second highest mean ( $M = 1.60$ ,  $SD = .60$ ), followed by heterosexual men ( $M = 1.49$ ,  $SD = .57$ ), and sexual minority men, who reported the lowest levels of incivility ( $M = 1.43$ ,  $SD = .51$ ).

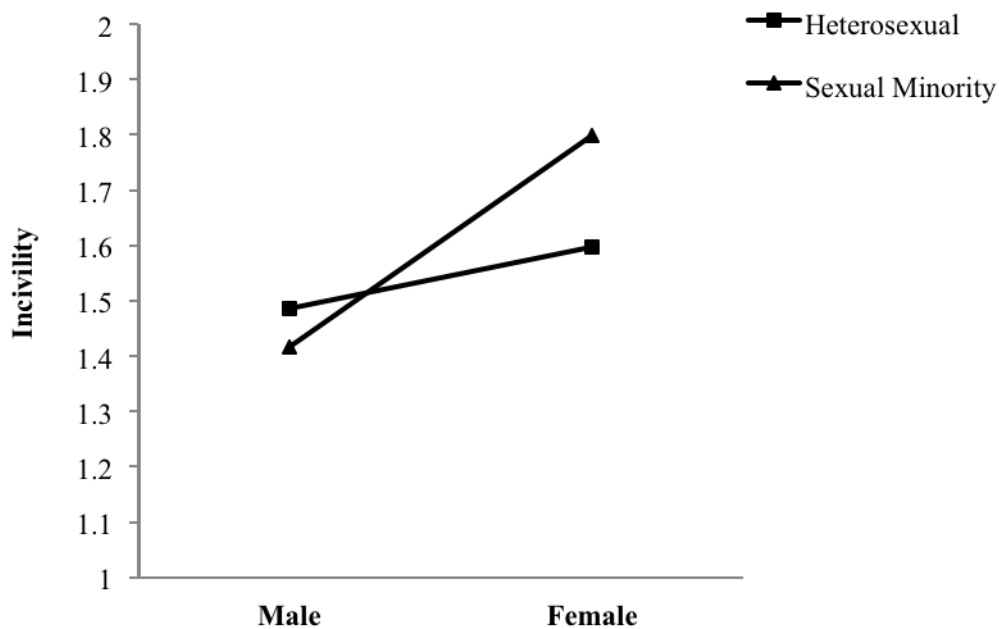


Figure 4. Interaction between sex and sexual orientation on incivility.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that minorities would report worse psychological and work outcomes (i.e., higher psychological distress, burnout, and turnover intentions, and lower job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment) with higher levels of incivility than members of dominant social groups. Specifically, two-way interactions were predicted, such that women would report worse outcomes than men with higher levels of incivility (3a), sexual minorities would report worse outcomes than heterosexuals with higher levels of incivility (3b), and ethnic minorities would report worse outcomes than Whites with higher levels of incivility (3c). Hypothesis 4 predicted that sexual minority women of color would report the worst psychological and work

outcomes with higher levels of workplace incivility compared to employees with fewer low-status social group memberships.

As in Study 1, I used hierarchical moderated regression to test Hypotheses 3 and 4. Incivility was the predictor; sex, sexual orientation, and ethnicity were the moderator variables; and psychological distress, job satisfaction, affective organizational commitment, burnout, and turnover intentions were the outcomes in the analyses. To correct for multicollinearity, I centered the incivility variable before computing interaction terms. Negative affectivity and political ideology of the region were again included as covariates. The tables on pages 55-59 show the results of these analyses.

Results showed that after accounting for negative affectivity and region political ideology, there were significant two-way interactions between incivility and a status variable (sexual orientation or sex) for two of the outcomes. Incivility and sex interacted to predict job satisfaction, and incivility and sexual orientation interacted to predict burnout. Simple slope analyses were conducted to examine the nature of these relationships. Lending support for hypothesis 3a, results showed that a main effect of incivility was qualified by an interaction between incivility and sex on job satisfaction ( $b = -.28$ ,  $\beta = -.09$ ,  $SE = .12$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Women ( $b = -1.03$ ,  $\beta = -.46$ ,  $SE = .25$ ,  $p < .001$ ) evidenced a stronger negative relationship between incivility and job satisfaction than men ( $b = -.74$ ,  $\beta = -.33$ ,  $SE = .26$ ,  $p < .01$ ). This interaction is presented in Figure 5.

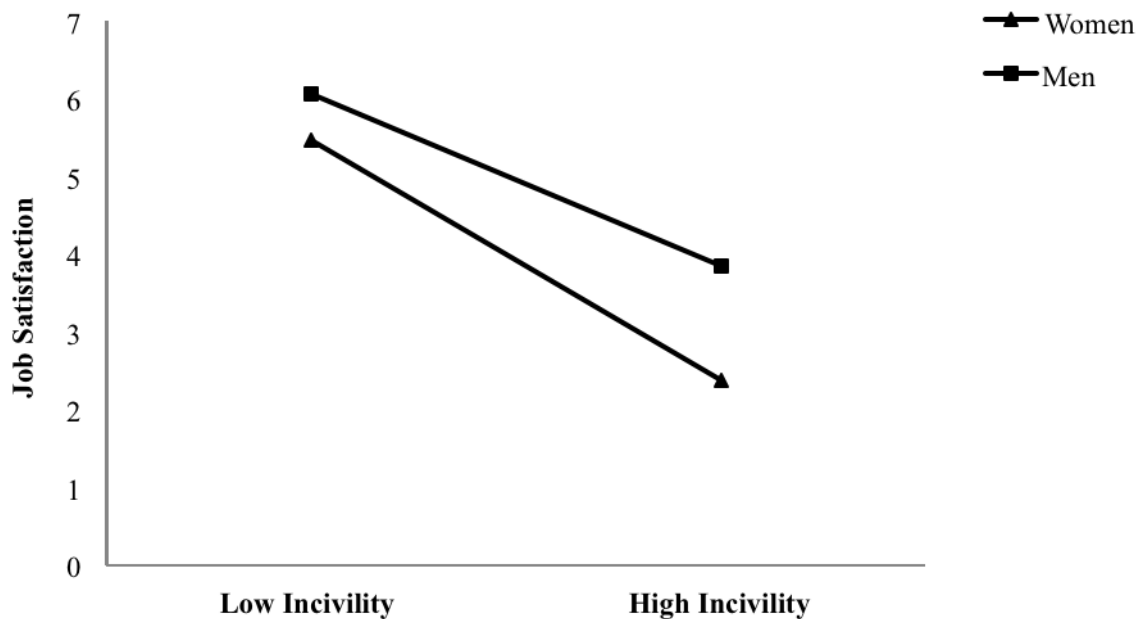


Figure 5. Interaction between incivility and sex on job satisfaction.

Results also revealed an interaction between incivility and sexual orientation on job burnout ( $b = .22$ ,  $\beta = .07$ ,  $SE = .10$ ,  $p < .05$ ), which is displayed in Figure 6.

Surprisingly, the positive relationship between incivility and burnout was significantly stronger for heterosexuals ( $b = .36$ ,  $\beta = .30$ ,  $SE = .11$ ,  $p < .01$ ) than for sexual minorities ( $b = .13$ ,  $\beta = .11$ ,  $SE = .14$ ,  $ns$ ), disconfirming hypothesis 3c. Hypotheses 3b was also not supported for any of the other outcome variables. However, it is important to note that both of these interactions were qualified by three-way interactions, which I describe below.

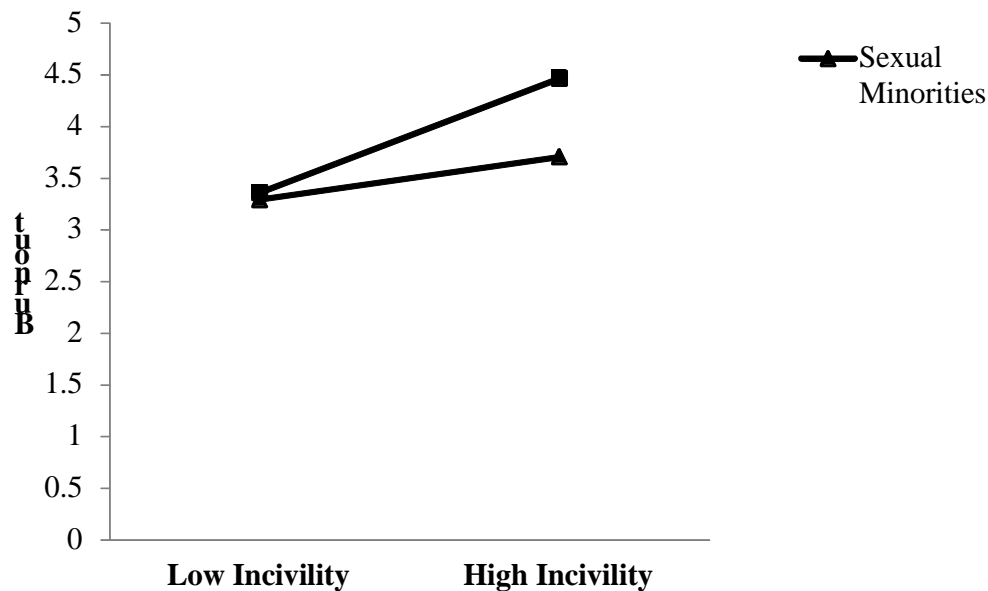


Figure 6. Interaction between incivility and sexual orientation on burnout.

Hypothesis 4 involved adding fourth and fifth steps to the moderated hierarchical regressions utilized to investigate hypothesis 3.<sup>5</sup> There was a three-way interaction among incivility, ethnicity, and sexual orientation on job satisfaction ( $b = -1.16$ ,  $\beta = -.45$ ,  $SE = .60$ ,  $p = .05$ ) and affective organizational commitment ( $b = -1.91$ ,  $\beta = -.65$ ,  $SE = .74$ ,  $p < .01$ ). These findings are presented in Tables 10 and 12 and Figures 7 and 8. Results also revealed a three-way interaction among incivility, sex, ethnicity for four of the five outcome variables: psychological distress ( $b = .26$ ,  $\beta = .28$ ,  $SE = .11$ ,  $p < .05$ ), burnout ( $b = .47$ ,  $\beta = .25$ ,  $SE = .24$ ,  $p = .05$ ), job satisfaction ( $b = -1.05$ ,  $\beta = -.31$ ,  $SE =$

<sup>5</sup> Because the four-way interactions were not significant, I removed the four-way interaction terms in the analyses to conserve degrees of freedom.



.44,  $p < .05$ ), and turnover intentions ( $b = .95$ ,  $\beta = .24$ ,  $SE = .49$ ,  $p < .05$ ). These interactions are presented in Tables 10, 11, 13, and 14, and in the figures on pages 63-66.

Table 10

*Hierarchical Moderated Regression Predicting Job Satisfaction in Study 2*

Predictor	Job Satisfaction			
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
	$B (\beta)$	$B (\beta)$	$B (\beta)$	$B (\beta)$
Constant	6.92***	6.37***	6.61***	6.18***
Negative Affectivity	-.43(-.37)***	-.30(-.26)***	-.29(-.25)***	-.30(-.26)***
Red States <sup>a</sup>	.03(.01)	.08(.02)	.06(.02)	.05(.01)
Blue States <sup>b</sup>	.16(.05)	.15(.05)	.13(.04)	.12(.04)
Incivility		-.96(-.43)***	-.74(-.33)**	-2.08(-.93)**
Sex <sup>c</sup>		-.17(-.06)*	-.28(-.10)	.15(.05)
Ethnicity <sup>d</sup>		.04(.01)	-.24(-.05)	.19(.04)
Sexual Orientation <sup>e</sup>		.25(.06)*	.06(.01)	.48(.11)
Incivility X Sex			-.28(-.09)*	.64(.20)
Incivility X Ethnicity			.15(.05)	1.66(.70)**
Incivility X Sexual Orientation			-.24(-.10)	.77(.32)
Sex X Ethnicity			.15(.06)	-.29(-.10)
Sex X Sexual Orientation			-.03(-.01)	-.46(-.16)
Ethnic X Sexual Orientation			.24(.07)	-.16(-.05)
Incivility X Sex X Ethnicity				-1.05(-.31)*
Incivility X Sex X Sexual Orientation				.03(.00)
Incivility X Ethnicity X Sexual Orientation				-1.16(-.45)*
Sex X Ethnicity X Sexual Orientation				.42(.15)
Total $R^2$	.14	.34	.34	.35
$\Delta R^2$	.14	.19	.01	.01
$\Delta F$	73.47***	74.62***	38.03***	29.07***

<sup>a</sup>The Red States variable was coded 1 = Republican, 0 = Democrat, 0 = Battle Region. <sup>b</sup>The Blue States variable was coded 1 = Democrat, 0 = Republican, 0 = Battle Region. <sup>c</sup>The sex variable was dummy coded 0 = female, 1 = male.

<sup>d</sup>The ethnicity variable was dummy coded 0 = Hispanic, Middle Eastern or Arab, and Native American or Alaskan Native, and 1 = White or Asian. <sup>e</sup>The sexual orientation variable was dummy coded 0 = sexual minority, 1 = completely heterosexual.

\* $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$  (two-tailed).

Table 11

*Hierarchical Moderated Regression Predicting Burnout in Study 2*

Predictor	Burnout			
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )
Constant	2.71***	2.94***	2.99***	2.93***
Negative Affectivity	.25(.41)***	.20(.33)***	.20(.33)***	.20(.33)***
Red States <sup>a</sup>	.03(.02)	.02(.01)	.02(.01)	.03(.01)
Blue States <sup>b</sup>	-.06(-.04)	-.06(-.04)	-.06(-.04)	-.05(-.03)
Incivility		.36(.30)***	.36(.30)**	.02(.02)
Sex <sup>c</sup>		-.12(-.08)**	-.25(-.17)*	-.14(-.10)
Ethnicity <sup>d</sup>		-.03(-.01)	-.09(-.04)	-.03(-.01)
Sexual Orientation <sup>e</sup>		.06(.02)	.18(.08)	.42(.18)*
Incivility X Sex			.09(.05)	.52(.30)*
Incivility X Ethnicity			-.01(-.01)	.34(.27)
Incivility X Sexual Orientation			-.22(-.07)*	.28(.09)
Sex X Ethnicity			.15(.10)	.02(.01)
Sex X Sexual Orientation			-.06(-.02)	-.60(-.17)
Ethnicity X Sexual Orientation			-.07(-.03)	-.36(-.15)
Incivility X Sex X Ethnicity				-.47(-.25)*
Incivility X Sex X Sexual Orientation				-.13(-.02)
Incivility X Ethnicity X Sexual Orientation				-.53(-.15)
Sex <sup>a</sup> X Ethnicity X Sexual Orientation				.64(.17)
Total $R^2$	.17	.27	.28	.29
$\Delta R^2$	.17	.10	.01	.01
$\Delta F$	91.18***	55.45***	28.60***	22.38***

<sup>a</sup>The Red States variable was coded 1 = Republican, 0 = Democrat, 0 = Battle Region. <sup>b</sup>The Blue States variable was coded 1 = Democrat, 0 = Republican, 0 = Battle Region. <sup>c</sup>The sex variable was dummy coded 0 = female, 1 = male.

<sup>d</sup>The ethnicity variable was dummy coded 0 = Hispanic, Middle Eastern or Arab, and Native American or Alaskan Native, and 1 = White or Asian. <sup>e</sup>The sexual orientation variable was dummy coded 0 = sexual minority, 1 = completely heterosexual.

\* $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$  (two-tailed).

Table 12

*Hierarchical Moderated Regression Predicting Affective Organizational Commitment in Study 2*

Predictor	Affective Organizational Commitment			
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )
Constant	6.10***	5.16***	4.85***	4.97***
Negative Affectivity	-.42(-.32)***	-.30(-.22)***	-.29(-.22)***	-.30(-.22)***
Red States <sup>a</sup>	.07(.02)	.10(.03)	.10(.03)	.09(.02)
Blue States <sup>b</sup>	.21(.06)	.20(.06)*	.20(.06)*	.20(.06)*
Incivility		-.91(-.35)***	-1.07(-.42)***	-2.04(-.80)***
Sex <sup>c</sup>		.21(.06)*	.36(.12)	-.41(-.13)
Ethnicity <sup>d</sup>		.37(.07)**	.69(.14)*	.55(.11)
Sexual Orientation <sup>e</sup>		.16(.03)	.48(.10)	.37(.07)
Incivility X Sex			.06(.01)	-.84(-.22)
Incivility X Ethnicity			.16(.06)	1.30(.48)*
Incivility X Sexual Orientation			-.01(-.00)	1.66(.60)*
Sex X Ethnicity			-.08(-.02)	.75(.24)
Ethnicity X Sexual Orientation			-.33(-.09)	-.18(-.04)
Sex X Sexual Orientation			-.09(-.02)	.68(.22)
Incivility X Sex X Sexual Orientation				.02(.00)
Sex X Sexual Orientation X Ethnicity				-.82(-.26)
Incivility X Sex X Ethnicity				.94(.24)
Incivility X Ethnicity X Sexual Orientation				-1.91(-.65)**
Total $R^2$	.10	.24	.25	.25
$\Delta R^2$	.10	.14	.00	.01
$\Delta F$	51.52***	47.62***	23.83***	18.41***

<sup>a</sup>The Red States variable was coded 1 = Republican, 0 = Democrat, 0 = Battle Region. <sup>b</sup>The Blue States variable was coded 1 = Democrat, 0 = Republican, 0 = Battle Region. <sup>c</sup>The sex variable was dummy coded 0 = female, 1 = male. <sup>d</sup>The ethnicity variable was dummy coded 0 = Hispanic, Middle Eastern or Arab, and Native American or Alaskan Native, and 1 = White or Asian. <sup>e</sup>The sexual orientation variable was dummy coded 0 = sexual minority, 1 = completely heterosexual.

\* $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$  (two-tailed).

Table 13

*Hierarchical Moderated Regression Predicting Psychological Distress in Study 2*

Predictor	Psychological Distress			
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )
Constant	.91***	1.04***	1.13***	1.18***
Negative Affectivity	.15(.46)***	.12(.38)***	.12(.39)***	.12(.39)***
Red States <sup>a</sup>	-.00(-.00)	-.01(-.01)	-.01(-.01)	-.00(-.01)
Blue States <sup>b</sup>	-.01(-.01)	-.01(-.01)	-.01(-.01)	-.00(-.01)
Incivility		.17(.27)***	.11(.17)	-.23(-.19)
Sex <sup>c</sup>		.01(.02)	-.10(-.14)	-.13(-.18)
Ethnicity <sup>d</sup>		.03(.02)	-.02(-.02)	-.07(-.06)
Sexual Orientation <sup>e</sup>		-.10(-.09)**	-.19(-.16)*	-.23(-.19)
Incivility X Sex			.02(.03)	-.19(-.22)
Incivility X Ethnicity			.00(.00)	-.13(-.19)
Incivility X Sexual Orientation			.05(.07)	.05(.08)
Sex X Ethnicity			.05(.07)	.07(.10)
Sex X Sexual Orientation			.08(.11)	.11(.14)
Ethnicity X Sexual Orientation			.03(.03)	.07(.08)
Incivility X Sex X Ethnicity				.26(.28)*
Incivility X Sex X Sexual Orientation				-.01(-.01)
Incivility X Ethnicity X Sexual Orientation				.13(.18)
Sex <sup>a</sup> X Ethnicity x Sexual Orientation				-.01(-.02)
Total $R^2$	.21	.30	.30	.31
$\Delta R^2$	.21	.09	.00	.00
$\Delta F$	114.27***	60.06***	30.37***	23.18***

<sup>a</sup>The Red States variable was coded 1 = Republican, 0 = Democrat, 0 = Battle Region. <sup>b</sup>The Blue States variable was coded 1 = Democrat, 0 = Republican, 0 = Battle Region. <sup>c</sup>The sex variable was dummy coded 0 = female, 1 = male. <sup>d</sup>The ethnicity variable was dummy coded 0 = Hispanic, Middle Eastern or Arab, and Native American or Alaskan Native, and 1 = White or Asian. <sup>e</sup>The sexual orientation variable was dummy coded 0 = sexual minority, 1 = completely heterosexual.

\* $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$  (two-tailed).

Table 14

*Hierarchical Moderated Regression Predicting Turnover Intentions in Study 2*

Predictor	Turnover Intentions			
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )	<i>B</i> ( $\beta$ )
Constant	1.62***	2.35***	2.11***	2.05**
Negative Affectivity	.38(.27)***	.25(.18)***	.24(.17)***	.24(.17)***
Red States <sup>a</sup>	-.00(-.00)	-.04(-.01)	-.02(-.01)	-.01(-.00)
Blue States <sup>b</sup>	-.28(-.08)	-.28(-.08)	-.26(-.08)	-.26(-.08)
Incivility		.92(.34)***	.95(.35)**	1.06(.39)*
Sex <sup>c</sup>		.13(.04)	.49(.15)	.66(.20)
Ethnicity <sup>d</sup>		-.31(-.06)*	-.12(-.02)	-.08(-.01)
Sexual Orientation <sup>e</sup>		-.18(-.03)	-.06(-.01)	.00(.00)
Incivility X Sex			.29(.07)	-.18(-.04)
Incivility X Ethnicity			-.13(-.04)	-.54(-.18)
Incivility X Sexual Orientation			-.06(-.02)	.18(.06)
Sex X Ethnicity			-.33(-.10)	-.56(-.17)
Sex X Sexual Orientation			-.07(-.02)	-.28(-.08)
Ethnicity X Sexual Orientation			-.04(-.01)	-.09(-.02)
Incivility X Sex X Ethnicity				.95(.24)*
Incivility X Sex X Sexual Orientation				-.38(-.09)
Incivility X Ethnicity X Sexual Orientation				.97(.31)
Sex X Ethnicity x Sexual Orientation				.26(.07)
Total $R^2$	.07	.20	.20	.21
$\Delta R^2$	.07	.13	.01	.01
$\Delta F$	35.58***	36.75***	18.84***	14.50***

<sup>a</sup>The Red States variable was coded 1 = Republican, 0 = Democrat, 0 = Battle Region. <sup>b</sup>The Blue States variable was coded 1 = Democrat, 0 = Republican, 0 = Battle Region. <sup>c</sup>The sex variable was dummy coded 0 = female, 1 = male. <sup>d</sup>The ethnicity variable was dummy coded 0 = Hispanic, Middle Eastern or Arab, and Native American or Alaskan Native, and 1 = White or Asian. <sup>e</sup>The sexual orientation variable was dummy coded 0 = sexual minority, 1 = completely heterosexual.

\* $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$  (two-tailed).

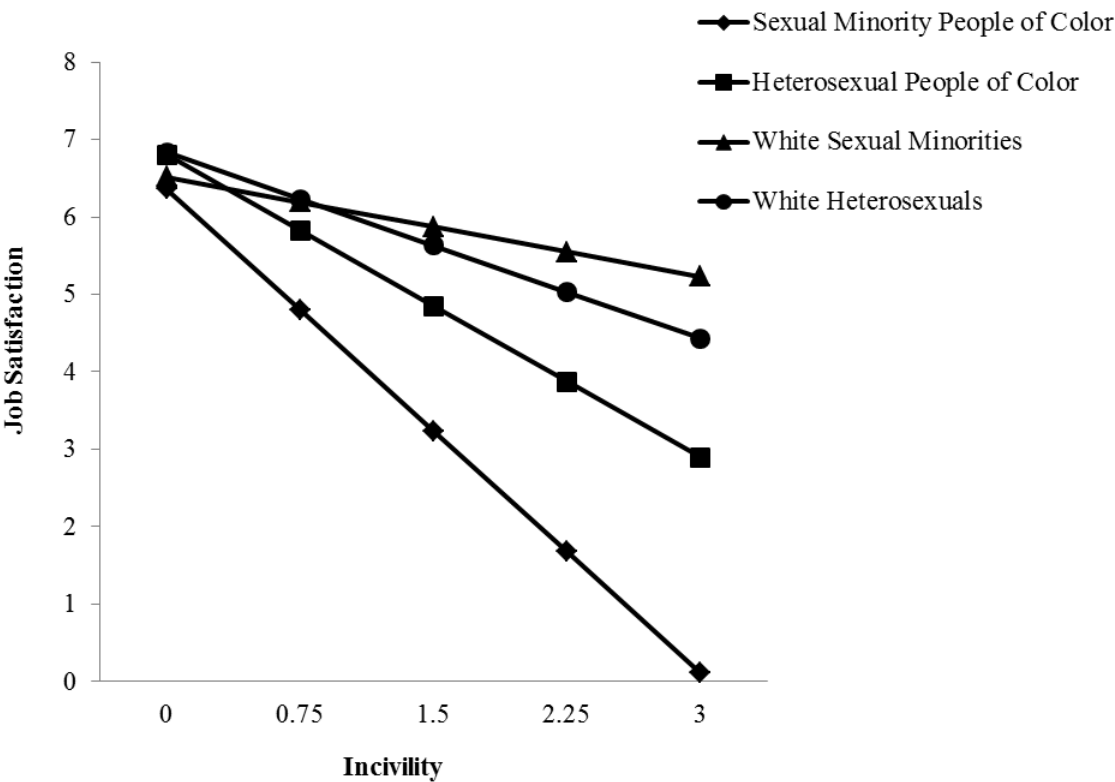


Figure 7. Interaction among incivility, ethnicity, and sexual orientation on job satisfaction.

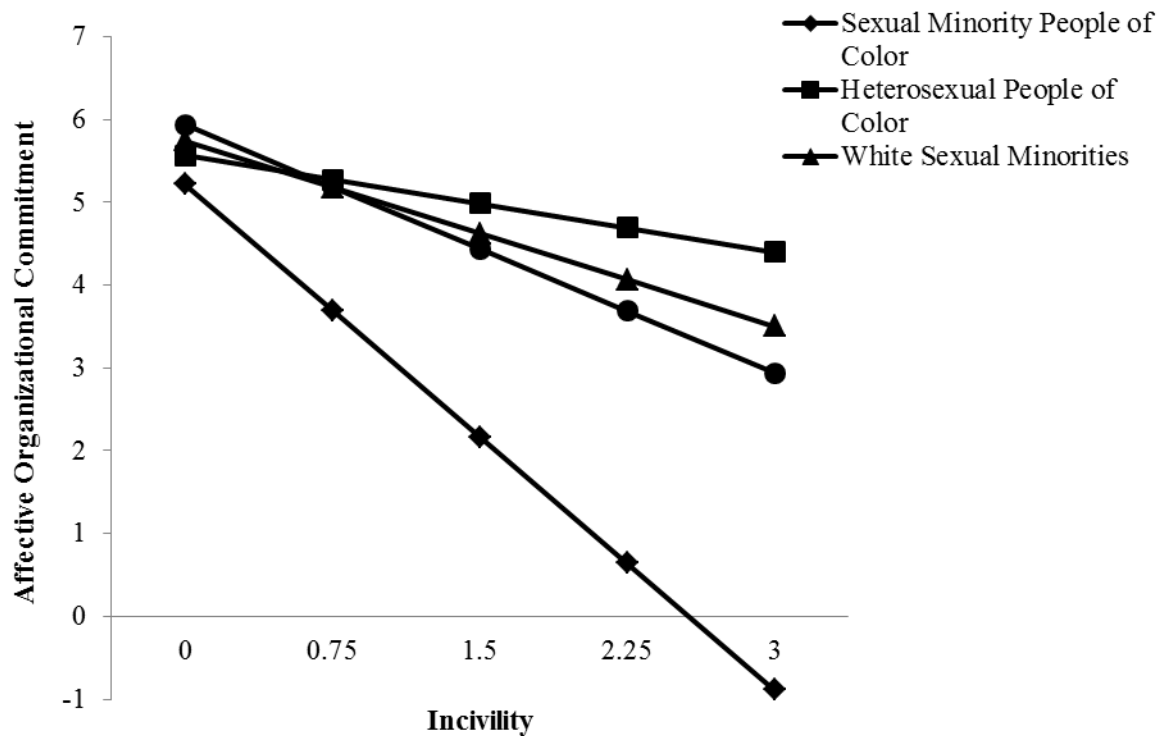


Figure 8. Interaction between incivility, ethnicity, and sexual orientation on affective organizational commitment.

For the first set of interactions among incivility, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, simple slope analyses revealed that for job satisfaction, sexual minorities of color reported the lowest levels of job satisfaction with greater incivility ( $b = -2.08$ ,  $\beta = -.93$ ,  $SE = .75$ ,  $p < .01$ ; see Table 10). Simple slopes were also significant for heterosexual people of color ( $b = -1.30$ ,  $\beta = -.58$ ,  $SE = .28$ ,  $p < .001$ ), sexual minority people of color ( $b = -.82$ ,  $\beta = -.37$ ,  $SE = .22$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and heterosexual whites ( $b = -.80$ ,  $\beta = -.35$ ,  $SE = .09$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Sexual minority whites did not have a significant simple slope ( $b = -.42$ ,  $\beta = -.19$ ,  $SE = .38$ ,  $p = ns$ ). There was also a significant simple two-way interaction for this outcome variable ( $b = -1.66$ ,  $\beta = -.70$ ,  $SE = .67$ ,  $p < .01$ ): within sexual minorities,

ethnicity influenced the strength of the relationship between incivility and job satisfaction with sexual minorities of color showing a stronger negative relationship (the strongest overall) than sexual minority Whites (whose slope was nonsignificant).

There was also an interaction among incivility, ethnicity, and sexual orientation on affective organizational commitment, ( $b = -1.91$ ,  $\beta = -.65$ ,  $SE = .74$ ,  $p < .01$ ) (see Table 12 and Figure 8). As with job satisfaction, sexual minorities of color reported the lowest affective organizational commitment with greater incivility, ( $b = -2.04$ ,  $\beta = -.80$ ,  $SE = .57$ ,  $p < .001$ ). There were also two significant simple two-way interactions for this outcome variable. The first indicated that within sexual minorities, people of color and Whites differed ( $b = 1.30$ ,  $\beta = .48$ ,  $SE = .63$ ,  $p < .05$ ), with sexual minorities of color showing lower commitment with increasing incivility ( $b = -2.04$ ,  $\beta = -.80$ ,  $SE = .57$ ,  $p < .001$ ) as compared to sexual minority Whites ( $b = -.74$ ,  $\beta = -.29$ ,  $SE = .27$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The second significant two-way interaction demonstrated that within people of color, sexual minorities and heterosexuals differed ( $b = 1.66$ ,  $\beta = .60$ ,  $SE = .68$ ,  $p < .05$ ), with sexual minorities of color showing the strongest relationship between incivility and lowered affective commitment ( $b = -2.04$ ,  $\beta = -.80$ ,  $SE = .57$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and heterosexuals of color showing a nonsignificant relationship ( $b = .37$ ,  $\beta = .07$ ,  $SE = .21$ ,  $p = ns$ ). In addition to sexual minority people of color and sexual minority whites, heterosexual whites also evidenced a significant simple slope ( $b = -1.00$ ,  $\beta = -.39$ ,  $SE = .12$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

The second set of three-way interactions involved incivility, sex, and ethnicity. The first significant three-way interaction was for psychological distress ( $b = .26$ ,  $\beta = .28$ ,  $SE = .11$ ,  $p < .05$ ; see Table 13). Simple slope analyses revealed that White women



were the only group with a slope significantly different from zero ( $b = .15$ ,  $\beta = .24$ ,  $SE = .06$ ,  $p < .05$ ). However, the pattern of the strengths of the relationships across groups remained comparable to previous analyses, with men of color showing the strongest relationship between incivility and psychological distress ( $b = .36$ ,  $\beta = .57$ ,  $SE = .22$ ,  $p = .09$ ), followed by White women ( $b = .15$ ,  $\beta = .24$ ,  $SE = .07$ ,  $p = .02$ ), then women of color ( $b = .12$ ,  $\beta = .19$ ,  $SE = .14$ ,  $ns$ ) and, finally, White men ( $b = .10$ ,  $\beta = .15$ ,  $SE = .11$ ,  $ns$ ) (see Figure 9).

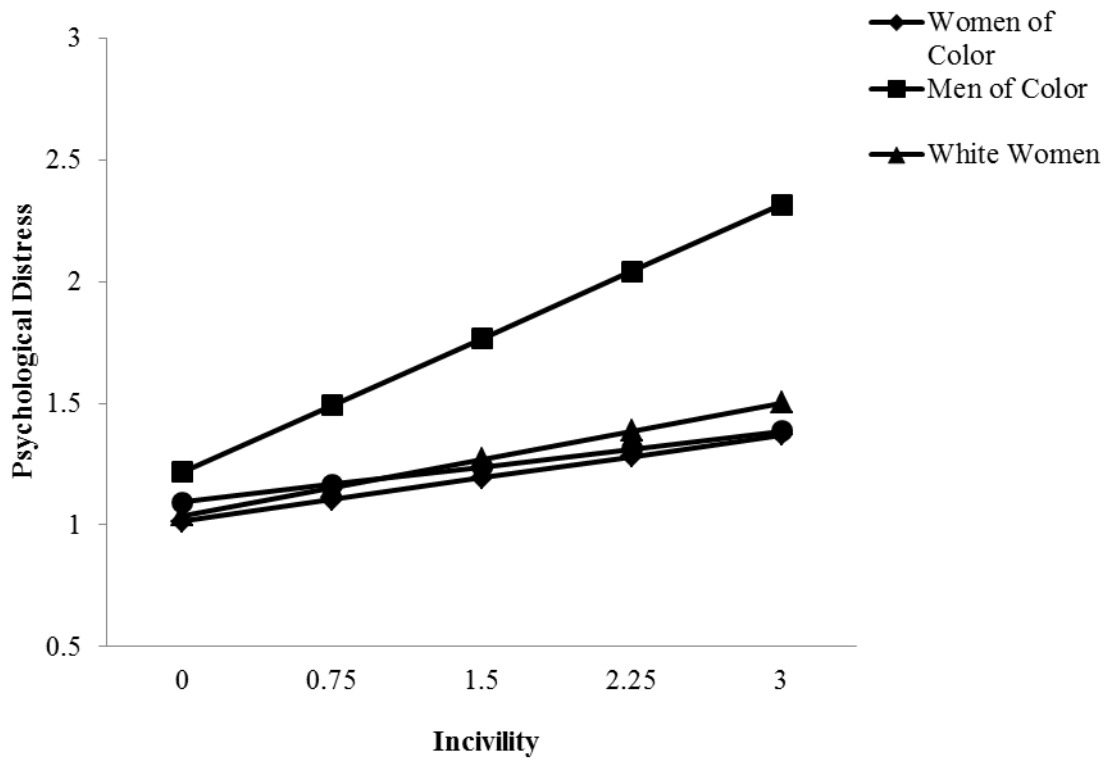


Figure 9. Interaction between incivility, sex, and ethnicity on psychological distress.

There was also a significant relationship among incivility, sex, and ethnicity for job burnout ( $b = .47$ ,  $\beta = .25$ ,  $SE = .24$ ,  $p = .05$ ; see Table 11), although none of the

simple slopes were significant. The pattern of findings echoed previous ones, with men of color reporting the highest levels of burnout with increasing incivility ( $b = .70$ ,  $\beta = .58$ ,  $SE = .42$ ,  $ns$ ), followed by women of color ( $b = .31$ ,  $\beta = .25$ ,  $SE = .26$ ,  $ns$ ), White women ( $b = .12$ ,  $\beta = .10$ ,  $SE = .13$ ,  $ns$ ), and, finally, White men ( $b = .04$ ,  $\beta = .04$ ,  $SE = .21$ ,  $ns$ ) (see Figure 10).

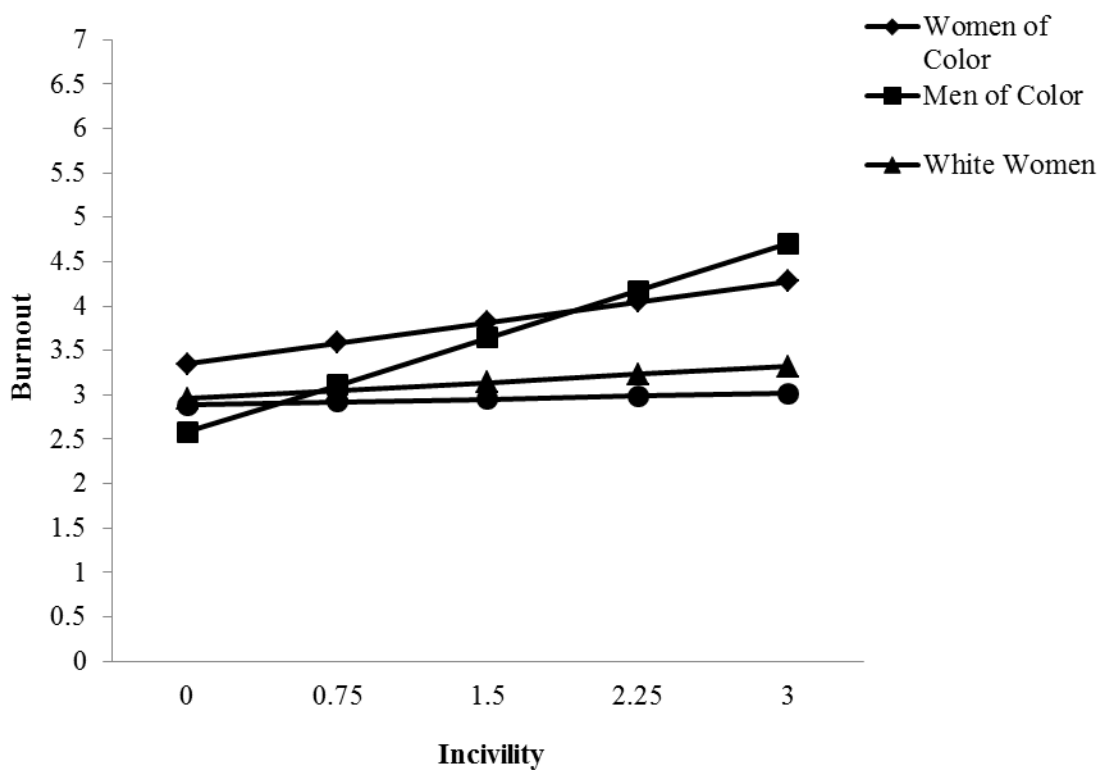


Figure 10. Interaction between incivility, sex, and ethnicity on burnout.

There was also a three-way interaction among incivility, sex, and ethnicity on job satisfaction ( $b = -1.05$ ,  $\beta = -.31$ ,  $SE = .44$ ,  $p < .05$ ; see Table 10 and Figure 11). Simple slope analyses revealed significant slopes for women of color ( $b = -1.42$ ,  $\beta = -.63$ ,  $SE =$

.49,  $p < .01$ ), White women ( $b = -.83$ ,  $\beta = -.37$ ,  $SE = .23$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and men of color ( $b = -2.08$ ,  $\beta = -.93$ ,  $SE = .75$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The simple slope for White men was nonsignificant ( $b = -.43$ ,  $\beta = -.19$ ,  $SE = .38$ ,  $ns$ ). Again, the strongest relationship between incivility and job satisfaction was for men of color, followed by women of color, White women, and White men—exactly the same pattern as burnout—but not exactly as predicted. Women of color (specifically sexual minority women of color) were predicted to have the worst job satisfaction.

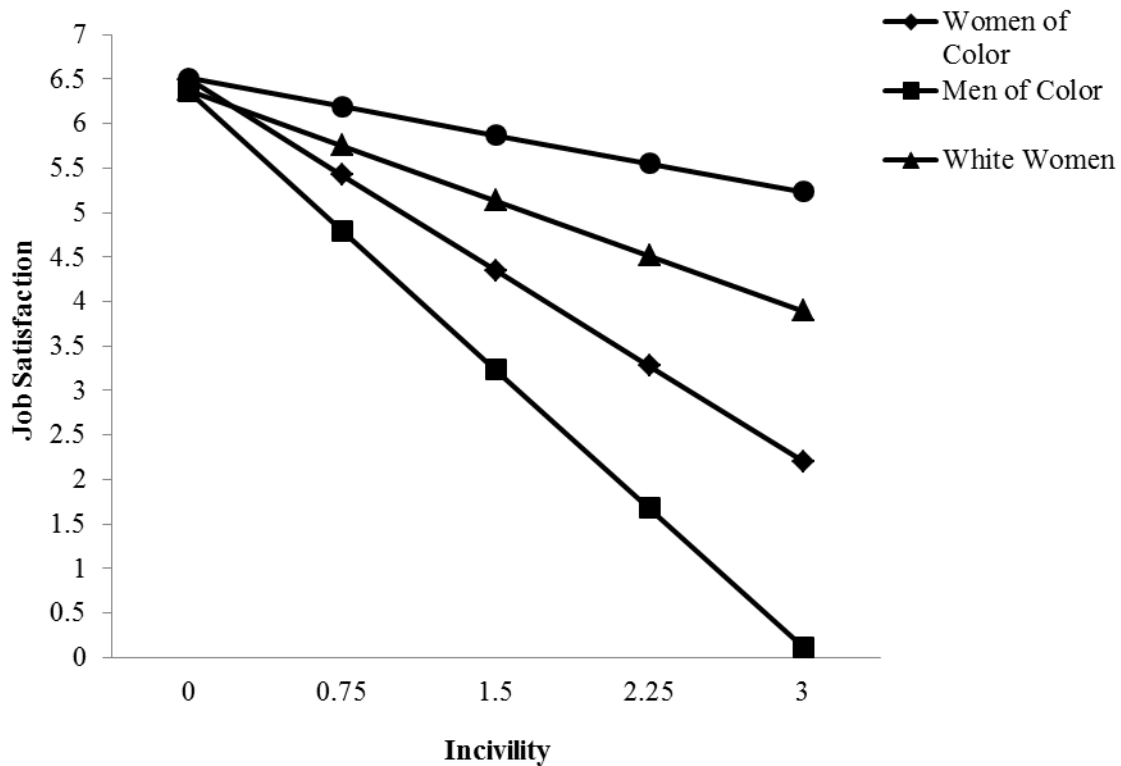


Figure 11. Interaction between incivility, sex, and ethnicity on job satisfaction.

Finally, turnover intentions were also predicted by the interaction between incivility, sex, and ethnicity ( $b = .95$ ,  $\beta = .24$ ,  $SE = .49$ ,  $p = .05$ ; see Table 14 and Figure 12), with simple slope analyses revealing significant slopes for women of color ( $b = 1.46$ ,  $\beta = .54$ ,  $SE = .62$ ,  $p < .05$ ), men of color ( $b = 2.01$ ,  $\beta = .75$ ,  $SE = .97$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and White women ( $b = 1.16$ ,  $\beta = .43$ ,  $SE = .30$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The simple slope analysis for White men was not significant ( $b = .53$ ,  $\beta = .20$ ,  $SE = .51$ ,  $ns$ ). Again, the turnover intentions of men of color were the most affected by incivility experiences, with these individuals reporting the highest turnover intentions with increased incivility.

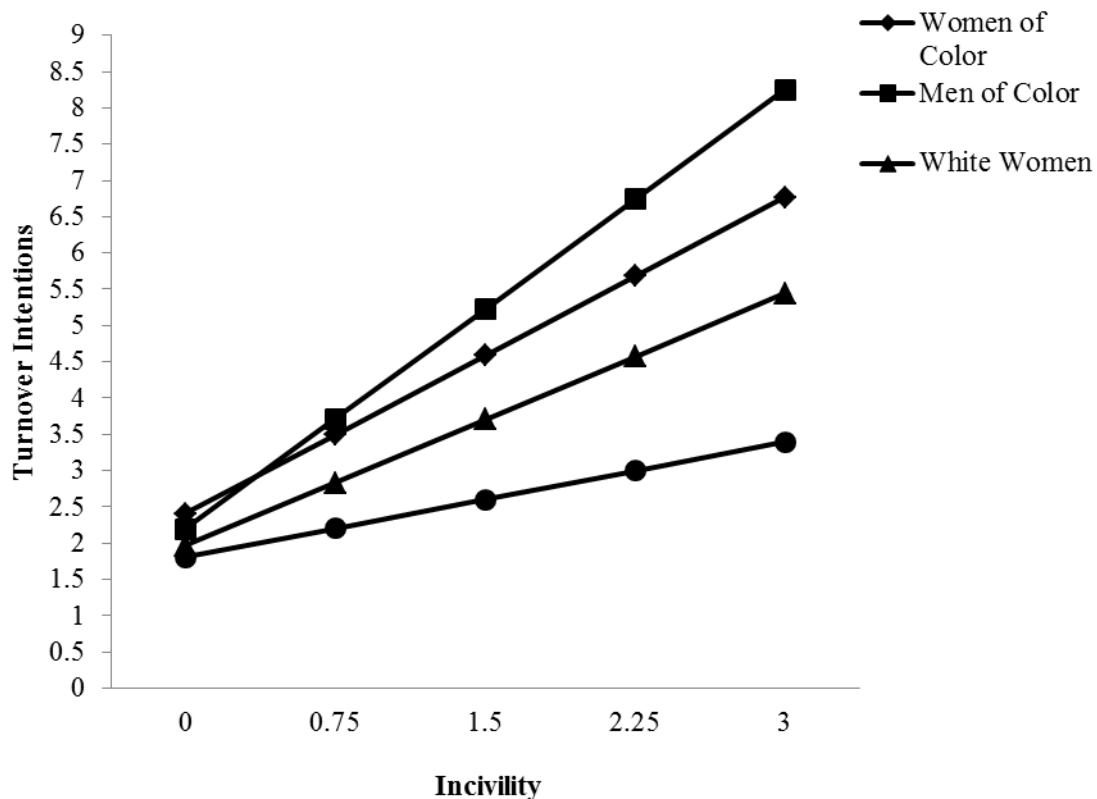


Figure 12. Interaction between incivility, sex, and ethnicity on turnover intentions.

## Discussion

Study 2 provided a more representative sample on which to test the hypotheses and to attempt to cross-validate the findings from Study 1 (see Table 15 for a summary of findings across the two studies). In Study 2, results showed that women reported more frequent incivility than men, corroborating past research (Cortina et al., 2001, 2002) and supporting Hypothesis 1a. Consistent with Study 1, ethnic minorities and Whites did not differ in the amount of incivility they reported and, therefore, Hypothesis 1b was not supported. However, unlike Study 1, sexual minorities and heterosexuals did not differ overall (looking across the other status variables) in the frequency with which they reported being targeted with incivility. Therefore, Hypothesis 1c could not be supported. Also differing from Study 1, sex and sexual orientation interacted to predict incivility. Hypothesis 2 was again not supported because ethnicity did not interact with sex and sexual orientation to predict incivility. However, there was an interaction of sex and sexual orientation in the expected direction: sexual minority women reported experiencing the highest level of incivility at work. This finding supports intersectionality theory in that those at the intersection of social identities reported different (and worse) mistreatment experiences, which is likely a result of their having multiple identities (Crenshaw, 1995). Not only did sexual minority women differ from other individuals in terms of the frequency of the incivility they experienced, but they also reported the highest mean levels of incivility.

Table 15

*Key Findings and Groups with the Worst Outcomes in Studies 1 and 2*

Outcome	Sample				
	Student Sample		Law Sample		
	Findings	Most Affected Group	Findings	Most Affected Group	Other Affected Groups
Incivility	Sexual Orientation	Sexual Minorities	Sex Sex X Sexual Orientation	Women Sexual Minority Women	
Psychological Distress	Incivility X Sex X Sexual Orientation	Sexual Minority Men	Incivility X Sex X Ethnicity	Men of Color	White Women
Job Satisfaction	Incivility X Sexual Orientation	Sexual Minorities	Incivility X Sex Incivility x Ethnic X Sex Orientation	Women Sexual Minority POC	Heterosexual POC Sexual Minority POC Heterosexual Whites
			Incivility x Sex x Ethnic	Men of Color	Women of Color White Women
Affective Commitment	Incivility X Sex X Sexual Orientation	Sexual Minority Men	Incivility x Ethnic X Sexual Orientation	Sexual Minority POC	Sexual Minority White Heterosexual Whites
Burnout	---	---	Incivility X Sexual Orientation	Heterosexuals	
			Incivility X Sex X Ethnicity	Men of Color	
Turnover Intentions	---	---	Incivility x Sex x Ethnicity	Men of Color	Women of Color White Women

*Note.* Burnout and turnover intentions were not measured in the Student Sample. For the Student Sample, there were no “other affected groups” as there were for the law sample.

In terms of the impact of incivility on outcomes, Hypotheses 3 and 4 received partial support. Incivility and sex interacted to predict job satisfaction, lending support to Hypothesis 3a. There was also an interaction between incivility and sexual orientation interacting predicting burnout, but Hypothesis 3c was not confirmed because heterosexuals evidenced the highest burnout. Hypotheses 3b was not supported in that there were no two-way interactions between ethnicity and incivility. In terms of Hypothesis 4, there were no 4-way interactions. However, incivility interacted with ethnicity and sexual orientation to predict job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment, and with ethnicity and sex to predict psychological distress, job burnout, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. For the first set of interactions, sexual minorities of color reported the lowest job satisfaction and lowest affective organizational commitment with heightened incivility, which supports hypothesis 4. However, the second set of interactions was similar to those of Study 1 in that they involved men, but were dissimilar in that they involved men of color rather than sexual minority. Men of color reported the worst outcomes with higher incivility; specifically, they reported the highest psychological distress, job burnout, and turnover intentions, and the lowest job satisfaction with higher levels of incivility. As with Study 1, minority men (whether it be ethnicity or sexual orientation) experienced the worst outcomes with higher levels of incivility, even though sexual minority women reported receiving the highest levels of rude behavior at work.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The present studies sought to address gaps in the workplace incivility literature by examining the extent to which demographic characteristics associated with societal power and status (i.e., sex, ethnicity, and sexual orientation) make employees vulnerable to workplace incivility and resulting negative outcomes. While there is a large body of literature documenting that members of low-status groups are at risk for high-intensity mistreatment at work, such as harassment and discrimination (Brief et al., 1997; Dipboye & Colella, 2005; Hebl et al., 2002; Settles, Cortina, Malley, & Stewart, 2006), there has been far less research documenting the experiences of low-status individuals when targeted with subtle forms of mistreatment, such as workplace incivility. This dearth of research on low-status targets of incivility is surprising considering that discrimination seems to be more subtle in nature than ever before (Brief & Barsky, 2000; Deitch et al., 2003). Further, while there have been a few isolated studies investigating differences in the frequency of incivility experiences and the severity of outcomes by sex (Cortina et al., 2001, 2002), there has been only one unpublished study (Cortina et al., 2004) looking explicitly at incivility experiences of ethnic minorities, and no studies to my knowledge investigating the incivility experiences of sexual minorities or those with multiple minority identities. The present study addressed these lacunae in the literature by being one of the first to examine the incivility experiences of sexual minorities and those with multiple low-status identities. In light of the call for and importance of real-life implications for research on discrimination (e.g., Fiske, 2000), these contributions are especially important in that they allow researchers to begin to examine how routine



uncivil treatment toward low-status employees affects individuals' psychological and occupational well-being.

Several theories informed the foci and hypotheses investigated in this paper. Selective incivility theory (Cortina, 2008), which is based on theories of social context, posits that individuals are not randomly chosen for uncivil treatment but, rather, that individuals with low-status identities are especially likely to be targeted. Intersectionality theory (Crenshaw, 1995) informs selective incivility theory by highlighting that individuals with multiple minority identities are likely to have unique and especially frequent uncivil experiences. Further, social stress theory, which includes the differential exposure and differential vulnerability hypotheses, predicts that low-status individuals have the worst outcomes in society both because they experience higher frequencies of stress and because they are more emotionally reactive to stress than majority-group members. Finally, minority stress theory (Meyer, 1995) predicts that low-status individuals are likely to experience the worst outcomes as a result of incivility because of the daily stress they face as a minority and the limited resources and social support available to low-status individuals to cope with these experiences. On the basis of these theories, I predicted that low-status employees would report higher frequencies of uncivil experiences and show more pronounced negative psychological and work outcomes with higher levels of incivility compared to their higher-status counterparts. Especially unique to this study, I investigated sexual minorities and employees who hold multiple low-status identities, proposing the latter group of individuals would be most frequently targeted and most negatively affected by incivility.

Foremost, this study demonstrated that the intersections of low-status identities are meaningful to the study of workplace incivility. In the more diverse law professor sample utilized in Study 2, results indicated that individuals with multiple minority statuses (i.e., sexual minority women) reported the highest frequency of incivility experiences. In both Studies 1 and 2, individuals at the intersections of identities (specifically sexual minority men, sexual minorities of color, and men of color) had significantly different outcomes as a result of incivility experiences than the members of other status groups. Interestingly, in addition to sexual minorities of color (which was in line with my predictions and theory), it was minority men—sexual minority men in Study 1, and men of color in Study 2—who had the most detrimental outcomes as a result of incivility. Although these findings contradict the focal theories of this study in that all would hypothesize that minority women would have the worst outcomes, the findings are in line with some past research regarding the outcomes of incivility and sexual harassment by gender (Cortina et al., 2001; Kaukiainen et al., 2001; Rospenda, Fujishiro, Shannon, & Richman, 2008; Street, Gradus, Strafford, & Kelly, 2007). For example, Cortina et al. (2001) found that men actually had worse outcomes as a result of incivility than women. In the proceeding sections I draw upon additional theory to explore why these findings may have occurred.

In thinking about minority men broadly (both sexual minority and ethnic minority men), it may be that minority men are most negatively affected by incivility because they are less used to coping with stress as they are members of at least one (very powerful) majority group in that they are male. It is also possible that minority men may

suffer greater negative effects from incivility because there is greater ambiguity regarding whether they are being specifically selected for mistreatment on the basis of their other minority identities or whether their status positions were irrelevant to their selection for mistreatment. While in the past some researchers have argued that ambiguity about the reason for mistreatment protects victims by allowing them a plausible external attribution for harm (e.g., Crocker & Major, 1989), subsequent research has found that ambiguity about the reason for mistreatment may actually lead victims to blame themselves. In turn, this internal attribution leads to worse outcomes as a result of mistreatment. For example, Ruggiero and Taylor (1995) found that victims of unambiguous forms of discrimination attributed their failures to discrimination, but when the mistreatment was ambiguous (i.e., not clearly discrimination), victims attributed their failures to themselves. Further, Dardenne, Dumont, and Bollier (2007) found that “benevolent sexism” (i.e., the portrayal of women as warm but inept) led victims to experience self-doubt, whereas hostile sexism was more likely to result in victims’ discounting of the opinions of harassers as discriminatory. Therefore, when minority men face ambiguous discrimination they may evidence worse outcomes because there is a higher level of ambiguity with regard to why they are being mistreated. Finally, there is evidence from the coping literature that women use virtually all coping strategies more frequently than men do (Tamres, Janicki, & Helgeson, 2002). So, perhaps, men evidence worse outcomes from mistreatment because they are not as effective at coping with interpersonal stressors. Certainly, more research is needed to

understand the mechanisms underlying minority men's negative outcomes of experiencing incivility.

Another important finding and contribution of the present research was that sexual minorities (in combination with other status variables) reported the highest levels of incivility and the worst outcomes as a result of incivility. This is one of the first studies to investigate the experiences and outcomes of incivility for sexual minorities. It may be that the experiences surrounding incivility are especially harmful to sexual minorities due the daily stress they experience with regard to being "out" at work (Meyer, 1995; Waldo, 1999). Further, sexual minorities may face even more ambiguity with regard to why they are being targeted with incivility because, unlike gender or ethnicity, sexual orientation is an "invisible" identity (Claire, Beatty, & Maclean, 2005; Ragins, 2008). Therefore, sexual minorities may be especially negatively affected by trying to understand whether the incivility instigated toward them was due to their sexual orientation, to another aspect of their identity, or is unrelated to any status characteristic.

It is also possible that the theory of intersectionality, as well as theories pertaining to differential vulnerability are incorrect. Perhaps it is not simply that those with the most low-status minority identities have the worst outcomes but, rather, that the specific combination of minority *and* majority identities informs reactions and consequences of mistreatment. Looking at the intersections of identities that were significant in these studies, sexual minority men and men of color may have the most obstacles to overcoming discrimination and, perhaps, also face worse forms of discrimination than members of other status groups (such as women of color and sexual

minority women). In thinking about why gay men in particular evidenced the worst outcomes in Study 1, there is evidence from the sexual prejudice literature that gay men and lesbians have different experiences as targets of prejudice. This small body of empirical research suggests that attitudes toward gay men are more negative than attitudes towards lesbians, and that this difference is more pronounced among heterosexual men than women (Herek & Capitano, 1996; Kite & Whitley, 1998). Recent cases in the sports domain, which is also a strong heterosexist context, provide excellent examples of this difference for gay men and lesbians. As Clarke (1998) and Birch (1996) point out, it is difficult to name gay male athletes in the mainstream sporting arena. In an interview, former professional basketball player John Amichi spoke of his decision to publically come out, saying “There’s hardly any Hispanic players, no Asian-Americans, so that there’s no openly gay players is no real surprise. It would be like an alien dropping down from space. There’d be fear, then panic: they just wouldn’t know how to handle it” (Woods, 2002). Just as it is more difficult for gay men to come out in the sporting world, it is likely just as difficult in the workplace due to heterosexist norms that exist in society at large and, especially, because of the differential sexual prejudice faced by gay men. Furthermore, there are likely aspects of both samples that speak to why the particular minority male group reported the worst outcomes that they did in each sample. In the case of Study 1 and sexual minority men, the sample was taken from a university in the south. Norms for masculinity are stronger in the south, and there is also evidence that individuals are more homophobic in the midwestern and southern United States than in other areas (Herek, 1994). Based on this evidence, it is

perhaps unsurprising that gay men may reported especially negative outcomes in Study 1.

Turning to findings pertaining to men of color in Study 2, there are several possibilities for why this pattern of men of color evidencing the worst outcome emerged. First, it has been found that racism has particular psychological consequences for the masculine identity of African American men (e.g., Cazenave, 1984; Clatterbaugh, 1990; Majors & Bilson, 1992; Segal, 1990; Staples, 1978). One hypothesis used to explain this finding is that because norms set for White masculinity are also held out as gender ideals for African American men, a double bind is created for some African American men who, due to the social structure of society and do a history of racism and discrimination, are blocked from achieving certain aspects of the mainstream culture's masculine ideal (Clatterbaugh, 1990). Another hypothesis is that because women evidence greater movement across full-time and part-time work, when women face a work-related stressor they more likely and more able to remove themselves from that job or organization where the stressor occurs (Roxburgh, 1996). Men, on the other hand, are the traditional breadwinners and therefore have less flexibility to leave their jobs when faced with a stressor such as racism. This may be especially true of African American men, who tend to more strongly endorse traditional aspects of the male role, such as being a provider (Hunter & Davis, 1992, 1994), then men of other ethnic groups. As with Study 1, the nature of the sample probably also played a role in influencing these findings. For example, African Americans are the largest ethnic minority group represented among law school faculty today (AALS, 2009) (and they were also the

largest group represented in this study), but there are fewer African American men on law school faculties than African American women, and they are also hired at lower rates than African American women. It seems that African American men are actually the true token minorities of a field in which tokenism has long been present (Chused, 1988). Tokenism might help to explain some of the especially negative outcomes exhibited by men of color in Study 2. For example, Jackson, Thoits, and Taylor (1995) found that elite blacks experienced higher levels of work stress and psychological symptoms than nontokens. Specifically, they faced increases in “token stress,” such as loss of black identity, multiple demands of being black, a sense of isolation, and having to show greater competence. Given this research, it is not surprising that black men, who are tokens in legal academia, evidenced the worst outcomes in Study 2. Finally it is also important to consider that well-educated blacks are more likely than their less-educated counterparts to be confronted with discrimination (Sigelman & Welch, 1991). It appears to be that higher education leads to greater interactions outside of the black community and this in turn is associated with greater exposure to discrimination. In sum, the impact of experiencing racism at work may have especially detrimental consequences for ethnic minority men, especially African American men (about whom the majority of research has been focused). These men face pressure to conform to often conflicting gender and race-based expectations held by their community and by society as well as token status in many fields.

### **Limitations and Directions for Future Research**

Although the present study addresses several important gaps in the workplace incivility literature, there are a number of limitations and areas that future research could address. An obvious limitation is the reliance on single-source self-report data in both studies, which could give rise to common method bias (Doty & Glick, 1998; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). When this bias occurs, relationships between constructs tend to be inflated, possibly leading to inaccurate conclusions. To address this issue in the future, researchers might consider collecting data from multiple sources, such as supervisors or close family members of the employee.

The categorization of ethnicity and sexual orientation is also a limitation. As intersectionality theory proposes, there may be meaningful differences between people of color and between Whites and Asians that our dichotomously coded variables obscured. Future research should investigate the experiences of different ethnic minorities separately. It is important to note, however, that I conducted follow-up analyses doing just this, and the frequency and outcomes of workplace incivility did not vary significantly between the various ethnic groups. Similarly, the experiences of different sexual minorities may be unique with, for example, bisexual individuals having different mistreatment experiences than lesbians and gay men. However, like ethnicity, I dichotomized sexual orientation in the present study. Again, to try and rectify this issue, follow-up analysis were conducted and indicated that there were not significant differences among these groups. Another important aspect of sexual identity that was not measured in this study is “outness.” Outness is important because sexual orientation is a



“hidden identity” and, thus, the extent to which one is mistreated likely depends on how “out” one is at work (Claire et al., 2005; Ragins, 2008). In fact, past research has documented that those who are most out at work report the most mistreatment (Waldo, 1999). Therefore, in the future outness should be included along with a more traditional measure of sexual orientation.

This study made progress toward understanding the unique experiences of individuals with individual low-status identities as well as multiple low-status identities. I examined differences in the incivility experiences and outcomes of groups based on sex, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. However, there are likely other status-linked variables beyond these that are worth investigating, such as age, disability status, and socioeconomic status, that relate to the frequency of workplace incivility and the severity of outcomes related to incivility. Selective incivility theory and social context theories would predict that, for example, older workers, disabled individuals, and low SES individuals would experience more workplace incivility because these individuals are also members of low-status society groups (Cortina, 2008). Minority stress theory would predict that these individuals would also experience more negative outcomes as a result of these experiences due to the daily stress of being a minority with little social power or resources (Meyer, 1995).

Finally, it is unclear whether the findings of these two studies are generalizable to other industries, occupations, and types of individuals (for example, the samples were taken from institutions of higher education where one would expect relatively high SES individuals to dominate). Indeed, the samples included in the present research were

predominantly White, educated individuals. Participants were also limited in terms of the jobs and industries they were affiliated with, and in Study 2 they were all in legal academia. Future research should select specific organizations and industries in which more diverse samples can be recruited in terms of ethnicity, sexual orientation, education, SES, industry, and job type.

### **Conclusion**

This study advances the literature on workplace incivility by examining whether employees in low-status social groups are more frequently targeted with workplace incivility, including sexual minorities and those at the intersections of low-status identities. I also investigated whether minorities (especially those with multiple minority identities) have worse outcomes as a result of incivility experiences. Results suggest that women and sexual minorities experience the most frequent workplace incivility, and sexual minority and ethnic minority men are most likely to have negative outcomes as a result of incivility experiences. Future research should explore whether these findings are generalizable to other minority groups and other settings and should look further into causal mechanisms explaining the disproportionate negative outcomes experienced by minorities with multiple low-status identities.

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